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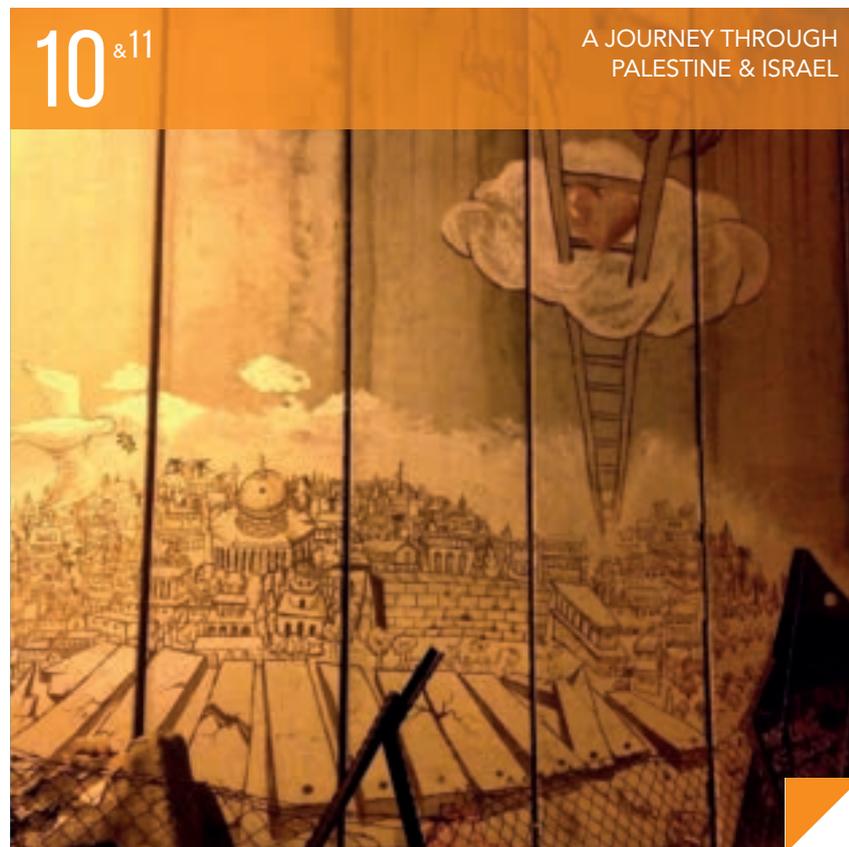
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Magazine of the Scottish Episcopal Church



Celebrating 10 years

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## Welcome to the re-launched *inspires* magazine!

### The first edition of *inspires* was published in March 2005... 10 years ago!

Over the past 10 years much has happened, both within and out-with the Church, and this first of our 10th anniversary editions attempts to reflect some of the things that contribute to the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church – its past and its present; and its hopes for the future!

In this edition, we hear some views and voices of a few people's experiences of the Church over the past 10 years (we will continue to feature more views and voices throughout the year so if you want to contribute to this page please get in touch!). We hear what some of our young people have to say about the Church. Our international focus is reflected in the experiences of a journey through Palestine as part of a Christian Aid visit. We hear about a new initiative that addresses the growing demand for spiritual accompaniment and "searching out the old paths". We look to the future formation of people for ministry in the new Scottish Episcopal Institute and meet the people leading this. The issues relating to same sex relationships and equal marriage have somewhat dominated much of the Church's time and energy over the past few years, and continue to do so. Each edition of the magazine this year will carry an article related to this topic – this edition highlights one view on the Theology of Marriage.

A new feature of the magazine includes 'Spotlight on a Diocese' – we will feature highlights of the life of each of our seven dioceses. The first one we hear from in this edition is the Diocese of Brechin.

We have included a Letters to the Editor page to encourage discussion and debate and offer a platform for readers to share their thoughts, opinions and musings.

I hope you enjoy reading the 10th anniversary *inspires* magazine and, along with the others on the Editorial Team, look forward to receiving your feedback and letters.

#### The Rev Chris Mayo

Convener, Information and Communication Board and Editor, *inspires* Magazine

# 10 YEARS STRONG!

Congratulations to *inspires* on ten years of valuable contribution to the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church!

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church



## IT'S also ten years since I moved to Scotland!

Then, I knew relatively little about the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The years since have been a time of extraordinarily challenging and fulfilling ministry – and very busy. Scotland is now home for Alison and for me and we are very happy here.

The early period of my time in Scotland was spent trying to understand the context. The Scottish Episcopal Church is both like and unlike the Church of Ireland of Southern Ireland – the church of my family roots and of my clergy forbears. Both are small churches shaped in some measure by shared culture and identity. The Church of Ireland carries the legacy of establishment and has tended to define itself over against Roman Catholicism. The Scottish Episcopal Church has nothing of establishment in its makeup. It is shaped by the complexities of Scottish history – the Jacobite links, the penal experience. It has tended to define itself over against Scottish Presbyterianism. Ireland is soaked in religion – Scotland, carrying the legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment, tends to be secular.

I spent time testing, asking and

exploring. I gradually began to see that this Church was entering into a time of opportunity. In my own diocese we carried out a review in which our congregations said they wished to move from 'decline to growth'. That in turn led to the testing of a diocesan initiative in outreach and growth – called Casting the Net.

On a wider canvas, it was clear that we were becoming a more substantial national Church in the mainstream of Scottish life. Gradually we have begun to live into that role. We work hard at establishing our place in the 'public square' through contributions in the media. We engage with the Scottish Government and in public discourse.

There have been other significant changes. We speak more easily of mission. We've taken difficult decisions about our training - the

new Scottish Episcopal Institute provides formation-led training for the next generation of clergy and Lay Readers. We are more at ease with our diversity, recognising the gifts which our evangelical community brings to our life. We seem to have the energy and the confidence to sustain our worshipping and pastoral presence right across Scotland when others are finding themselves in retreat.

Beyond Scotland, we've continued to develop an active network of Diocesan Companionship links and other partnerships. In my travels around the Anglican Communion, I've found that there are many places which have some of our history intertwined with theirs. They feel a comfortable belonging with us in a way which belies our relatively small size. That same connectedness enables us to play a significant role in the Anglican Communion.

Ahead lies the question which faces most churches today in the developed world – our response to issues of human sexuality. Archbishop Justin Welby has suggested that we should strive for 'visible unity in Christ with functional diversity'. This too will challenge us. By God's grace, we shall move forward together. ●



**NICOLA STURGEON**  
SCOTLAND'S FIRST MINISTER



**We are committed to openly engaging and empowering our communities.**

On the 10th anniversary of the Scottish Episcopal Church's *inspires* publication, I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the substantial and enduring influence of the Christian faith in transforming and inspiring Scotland's history, people and culture.

The Scottish Government values Scotland's Christian communities and the important role they play in developing community cohesion. The Scottish Episcopal Church plays a vital part in this work through Interfaith Scotland and the annual Just Festival as it promotes the development of inter faith relations and dialogue.

As a Government, we are committed to openly engaging and empowering our communities, promoting participation through democracy and dialogue. We value the commitment and leadership of Scotland's churches in this engagement as we work to make Scotland a fairer, more inclusive society. We look forward to continuing to work with the Scottish Episcopal Church and Scotland's Christian communities through 2015 and beyond. ●



**DAMIAN BATES**  
EDITOR IN CHIEF  
ABERDEEN JOURNALS LTD



**There's never been a better time to engage with your communities than via the media, particularly at a local and regional level.**

You have so much going on... what are you waiting for?

You are men and women of influence and have the opportunity to use the platforms of the media to speak your message and that of the gospels, in an engaging, relevant and compelling way. You have so much going on, so much happening and so much to shout about. So what are you waiting for?

Get in touch with the newsdesk and/or editor and ask what they are interested in; offer to meet them to discuss what you have to say and build a line of communication.

We may all have technology at our fingertips but communication in this manner is the same as it's always been: know who your audience is, what you are trying to say and engage, personally, with those who can be the conduit to getting your message across. It isn't rocket science! ●

# EASTER, AND EASTER'S COMING

The Rev Canon Ian Paton

Easter was the only 'feast' apart from Sunday that the early Christians celebrated. That is why some still say that the Church year has only two real seasons: 'Easter' and 'Easter's coming.' It's also why the services that make up the final three days of Holy Week – the *triduum* – tell just one story, the story of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection – the Paschal Mystery – and are really one continuous liturgy.

## **Palm Sunday: The Sunday of the Passion**

First there is Palm Sunday. The service has two parts. In the first half, we celebrate Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This is a big celebration, starting ideally outside the church, crying 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' We receive crosses made out of palm leaves. We go in procession to the church. It is festive and joyous.

But then, back in church, we hear the long reading of the Passion - the full story of the arrest, trial, suffering and death of Jesus. Not quite the celebratory mood of the procession.

Everyone should notice this stark contrast – how the crowd went from 'Hosanna!' to 'Crucify!' in a matter of days. It makes us recognise how easily we can go from welcoming Christ to

rejecting him. This is why Palm Sunday is also called "The Sunday of the Passion." It helps us to enter into Holy Week, and to recognise what is to unfold.

## **Maundy Thursday**

The *triduum* begins on Maundy Thursday as we remember Jesus' gift of the Eucharist, and his command (*mandatum*, from which comes 'Maundy') that we should love one another as he loves us.

## **Foot-washing**

The gospel is from John's account of the Last Supper, in which Jesus does not take bread and wine at all, but washes his disciples' feet. By this action Jesus says, here I am as servant, do this in memory of me.

So the service includes ritual foot-washing. Some churches have a representative group (twelve, like the apostles), whose feet are washed by the priest. Other churches invite the whole congregation to take part. However it is done, it is a sign of everyone's call to communion with Christ through service.

## **Eucharist**

The service now remembers Jesus' final meal with his disciples. Whether

it was the Passover or not (the Gospels do not agree on this), it was understood by Jesus and the first Christians as the new Passover in his blood.

## **Stripping**

After Communion, the Sacrament is taken to a separate altar or chapel, to be used on Good Friday. Then, while a psalm is read, the altar and sanctuary are stripped bare of all cloths, crosses, and candles. With this solemn gesture, the stripping and abandonment of Jesus is represented, as we prepare for Good Friday.

## **Watching**

Because this is one liturgy over three days, the service has no final prayer or blessing, but moves straight into the silent Watch. Sometimes this is kept throughout the night, people taking their turn in prayer and stillness, but otherwise until midnight. It dramatises the disciples watching with Jesus that night in Gethsemane.

## **Good Friday**

The Liturgy of Good Friday begins with silence. We don't need to be welcomed or gathered. It is as though we have been gathered since the night before.



### *The Passion*

The service includes the reading of the Passion, as on Palm Sunday, but this time from John. Reading it dramatically, with everyone taking a part, shows how we are all involved in the Passion of Christ.

### *Veneration of the Cross*

A large cross or crucifix is now brought into the church. It represents the wood on which our Saviour gave his life. So we come forward to venerate or honour that. Sometimes people kiss the cross, kneel before it, or touch it with the head or the hand, taking part with others in this action which is a prayer.

### *Intercession*

The Good Friday Prayers and their style (on which is based the way Sunday intercessions are now done) are perhaps the oldest liturgical ritual we have. We pray at the foot of the Cross for the unity of all Christians, for the Jewish people, for people who do not believe, for people in public office, and for people who are suffering.

### *Communion*

There is no celebration of the Eucharist on Good Friday, but instead we re-connect with the Lord's Supper

on Maundy Thursday, and what that liturgy means. Even in his death Jesus is the bread of life.

### *Departing in Silence, Again.*

We again end in silence and darkness, to link this service with the Easter Vigil, just as our beginning in silence connected us with Maundy Thursday.

### **The Easter Vigil**

The Easter Vigil tells the whole story of our creation and redemption. It was originally the only celebration of Christ's death and resurrection. It is a long service, but all of its symbols come together for one purpose, to remember the saving actions of God.

### *The Fire*

Early on Easter morning, before dawn, is the best time for the Vigil. In the darkness and silence (linking the Vigil with Good Friday and Maundy Thursday) a fire is kindled, and from that fire, the Easter Candle is lit, "May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds." From that candle we all light smaller candles and go in procession into the church. The deacon sings the Exsultet, the ancient song thanking God for all he has done and is doing in the Resurrection:

"Rejoice, heavenly powers. Sing, choirs of angels! Exult, all creation around God's throne! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the trumpet of salvation!"

### *The Readings*

A series of readings now tell the story of salvation - the creation of the world, the fall of humanity, Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac, the exodus from Egypt, the Covenant at Mount Sinai, and God's promises to restore his people. They lead up to the singing of the Gloria, and the final Gospel reading, the Resurrection of Christ.

### *Baptism and Eucharist*

Standing in the light of Christ, we reaffirm our Baptism, and baptise new members - the sign of our journey with Christ from death to life - and the Eucharist - the sign of living his risen life.

### **Easter's Coming**

Holy Week places the suffering of Jesus alongside the suffering of the world. Easter is how God takes the cross and makes it a sign of the victory of life over death, goodness over evil. In the liturgy of Holy Week and Easter we can glimpse the Resurrection for our own suffering, and try to help others find it in theirs. Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! ●



# LISTENING

## TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CHURCH

Claire Benton-Evans, Youth & Children Officer for the Diocese of Edinburgh

**'WE'RE fed up of having church done to us!'** This was the response from a group of teenagers whose church leaders asked them what they wanted from the church. The leaders had expected requests for more youth events or a better venue for their meetings - instead, they were challenged by teenagers who wanted to roll their sleeves up and get involved. 'The Church is supposed to be about helping people,' they said. 'Well, we want to help!' These teenagers didn't want to be entertained, they wanted to serve, and as a result they have become involved in helping with their local Community Care bus, delivering essentials to local people in need.

This is just one example of what can happen if we really listen to the voices of young people in our churches. It can change things, both for the young people themselves and for the Church. Last autumn a Listening Project was conducted jointly by the Dioceses of Edinburgh and Aberdeen and Orkney, which aimed to listen to children's experience of church, and to amplify their voices within the wider Church. The Listening Project team ran weekend events in each diocese, featuring a Family Fun Day

in Aberdeen's Westhill Community Church, an Out Loud Event for children, families and church leaders in Edinburgh's St Mary's Cathedral and All-Age Worship services in Inverurie and Galashiels. Each event was lively, colourful and interactive: children were invited to build a church out of Lego, explore the Bible through Godly Play storytelling, pray creatively with bubbles or chocolate coins and have fun with music and technology. Toddlers engaged in Play & Pray activities in the nave of the cathedral (and the Bishop of Edinburgh joined in!). There was also a Confirmation class for two teenagers with learning disabilities and a workshop on praying and worshipping with children with special needs.

It is hoped that the Listening Project will inspire church leaders and volunteers across the Scottish Episcopal Church to listen afresh to their children and young people, and the Listening Project Report contains many practical ideas and helpful resources.

As *inspires* magazine celebrates its 10th anniversary and re-launch in March, the editorial team would like to feature more contributions from young people in the Church. Do you know young people who

have something to say? This is one important way in which they can make their voices heard.

In church this Sunday, let's listen to what our children are saying in their awkward questions, their wondering about the Bible, their wacky ideas and their profound observations. Let's pay attention, too, to their non-verbal communication: what do their drawings tell us? What is the child who hides, or yells, or plays on the altar steps, telling us about our worship? Let's listen, and be ready for whatever might happen as a result of that listening. ●

*The Listening Project was devised by Stephanie Brock, Children and Families Ministry Officer for the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney, and Claire Benton-Evans, Youth and Children Officer for the Diocese of Edinburgh. A full report on the project will be published on both diocesan websites.*

*Photographs by Stephanie Brock, showing Play and Pray with the Bishop of Edinburgh; a Play & Pray leader listening to toddlers; Rev Lynsay Downs explaining worship with children with special needs; a Confirmation class for teenagers with learning disabilities.*

# THE INTERFAITH DIMENSION TO BEING SCOTTISH EPISCOPALIANS

The Rev John Conway, Convener of the Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths

**LAST October, in the wake of the horrific murder in Syria of the British Aid worker, Alan Henning, I was invited, in my capacity as Co-convenor of Edinburgh Interfaith Association, to visit and speak at Annandale Mosque in Edinburgh.** I arrived as the main Friday prayers were beginning, and so found myself in the midst of that large body of people at prayer. The Imam addressed them in Urdu, and then their own discipline of prayer started: the men around me stood, knelt, prostrated themselves, cupped their hands behind their ears in a profound gesture of a desire to listen, and murmured quiet prayers to God. It was an experience both familiar and strange, for I know something about prayer, about the desire to be in the presence of God, to speak and to listen, and yet this was very different to my practices of prayer.

To be in that company whose attention was directed to God was humbling and disorientating, for although I could connect and make sense of much of that practice of prayer, other parts were mysterious, even incomprehensible to me. I was then asked to offer a word. I sought to reassure that somewhat beleaguered community that others in our city understand when Muslims insist that ISIL are betraying the heart of Islam, and that any attempt to characterise our times as witnessing a fundamental clash between Islam and the West is deeply misguided and false.

That moment of meeting and solidarity was a small example of what it might mean to engage with the diversity we often trumpet. Of course the context was a reminder that diversity must have limits, and that motivated my desire to stand alongside Muslim brothers and sisters in abhorring violence. But I was also reminded that alongside our common humanity is a richness of religious expression that is disarming, strange and exhilarating.

As Episcopalians we should know something of what it feels like

to inhabit and articulate a minority religious identity: a faith that is greeted with incomprehension at times, and yet finds ways to offer something distinctive and vital to the common life of Scotland.

And that confidence in a distinctive identity and offering is increasingly true of the different religious communities amongst us: Buddhists, Sikhs, Unitarians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims – to name some. Each is the manifestation of a long tradition of religious thought and practice, now working out in necessarily incomplete ways what it means to live out the fundamental truths of that tradition in Scotland today. The answers that emerge from each tradition to that challenge are different, of course, and occasionally will be in disagreement with the priorities and beliefs of another tradition. Such disagreements need to be negotiated, but on the whole difference is not experienced as conflict, but as a helpful questioning of what you in turn find important, and how your tradition articulates and lives that truth out.

So a vital part of what it means to be an Episcopalian today is knowing something of our neighbours and what animates them. That exploration helps uncover the riches of our own tradition, encourages friendship, builds acts of solidarity across religious difference and creates community. The paradox of our interfaith present is that the more we reach out and engage with our diverse neighbours, the more faithful to Christ we become. ●

AS EPISCOPALIANS WE SHOULD KNOW SOMETHING OF WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO INHABIT AND ARTICULATE A MINORITY RELIGIOUS IDENTITY: A FAITH THAT IS GREETED WITH INCOMPREHENSION AT TIMES, AND YET FINDS WAYS TO OFFER SOMETHING DISTINCTIVE AND VITAL TO THE COMMON LIFE OF SCOTLAND.

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# BID THOU OUR SAD DIVISIONS CEASE: A JOURNEY THROUGH PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

The Rev Kate Reynolds

I **BEGAN** this past Advent in the dark in Bethlehem. I was the Scottish Episcopal Church representative (funded by the Provincial Overseas Committee) on an ecumenical partnership trip to visit humanitarian organisations and advocacy groups in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories as part of an ecumenical partnership trip organised by the Church of Scotland's World Mission Council.

At 4.30 in the morning on the First Sunday of Advent, we stood at Bethlehem Checkpoint 300 amid the hundreds of Palestinian workers queuing to travel through to work in Jerusalem and beyond. The checkpoint was packed and the queue was going nowhere. So we wandered the streets and watched Advent dawn through the olive trees. We stood in silence at the foot of the eight metre high separation barrier, the carefully graffitied messages of hope and peace and unity unable to mask its ugly reality.

We rejoined the queue at the checkpoint, and for an hour and twenty minutes, we stood in the jostling, shoving, desperate crowd, at times so close to those around us we could feel their hearts beating. I looked into eyes which held no hope and watched shoulders sink under the weight of exhaustion as we trudged through the concrete corridor towards the security gate. I saw Israeli teenage soldiers, some looking bored, others terrified. And I wondered how any of them could do this, day in and day out, and still keep any sense of sanity and humanity and dignity. That single experience summed up the effects of the systemic oppression and degradation present throughout the land.

Later that morning, I sat in the service at St Andrew's Church of

Scotland in Jerusalem. Tears filled my eyes as we sang: *O come, Desire of nations, bind / In one the hearts of all mankind; / Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, / And be Thyself our King of Peace. / Rejoice! Rejoice! / Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Over ten days, we had heard so many stories of land lost and dignity crushed. Seen so many scenes of division and devastation. Felt the fear which permeates the communities on both sides of the wall. Security and peace and unity seem a distant, impossible dream in this troubled land. The longings of Advent had never felt so real, so urgent.

I thought back to the voices we had had the privilege of hearing: the voices calling for justice, the voices shouting for an end to occupation, the voices crying out for peace.

A Jewish father who had lost his daughter in a suicide bombing when she was only 14: "I will not use my victimhood to victimise others. To be pro-peace, to speak out against Israel's actions as a state is not antisemitic. Please tell your community that."

An old Palestinian farmer who had seen his family land gradually taken from him: "I want peace. I do not want violence. But when soldiers destroy your house, kill your brother, beat your mother, you can see why suicide bombers do it. To live like this, to die, it is all the same. You are all complicit. You all stand by while we suffer. You do nothing. Jesus was crucified by empire. Now Europe and the USA and Israel are stabbing us in the belly. They are crucifying us."

Young teenage children in Jalazon refugee camp in Ramallah whose brother had been killed by Israeli police when he was playing football in

his schoolyard opposite a settlement, when asked what their favourite TV programme is: "The news. We always watch the news hoping for change and for peace."

A Jewish filmmaker for B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Centre for human rights in the Occupied Territories: "Working for human rights for all people, Israeli or Palestinian, is an action of love to my country." A young Beduin father in the South Hebron hills whose house was demolished shortly after his first child was born: "All I want is to live with my wife and daughter, to provide them with shelter, to raise a family. It's simple. But every time we build, our lives, our hopes are destroyed again."

And over and over, everyone we met — Palestinian, Israeli, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, man, woman, child: "We want peace. But it is so complicated."

*Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, / and be Thyself our King of Peace.*

Advent has now passed. We have celebrated the coming of Emmanuel, God with us. And now we have entered the season of Lent, a season of self-examination, a season when we consider what it means to journey with Christ into Jerusalem and towards the cross, a season of both prayer and intentional action.

It is so easy to feel helpless in the face of the deep, complex, complicated systemic inequality and injustice which exists in Israel and Palestine. It can seem impossible to know how we — as individuals, as congregations, as the Church — can make a difference.

I was fortunate to be able to attend the Kairos Palestine Conference in Bethlehem at the end of my visit. Marking the fifth



anniversary of the publication of the Kairos Palestine document, a document written by Church leaders in Palestine, it was an opportunity for Christians from all over the world to worship and pray alongside our Palestinian brothers and sisters and to learn more about the ways the occupation affects their daily lives. Most importantly, it was a chance to discuss how the wider church can not only stand in solidarity with them but also advocate, giving voice to those whose voices are rarely heard.

Throughout, a constant refrain echoed: Pray; pray for all who live in the shadow of occupation. But we were also urged to share stories, learn facts and engage with those who are in positions of authority in our country. And our brothers and sisters living in the land we call Holy extend an invitation to all their fellow members in the Body of Christ to come and see — to see not only the ancient stones where Jesus walked 2000 years ago, but to go on pilgrimage to the living stones, to visit the prophets of today, to see firsthand not only the sad divisions but also the hints of hope for the reign of the King of Peace. ●

*Kate has blogged about her recent visit to Palestine and Israel at [revisedontology.com](http://revisedontology.com)*



I THOUGHT BACK TO THE VOICES WE HAD HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF HEARING: THE VOICES CALLING FOR JUSTICE, THE VOICES SHOUTING FOR AN END TO OCCUPATION, THE VOICES CRYING OUT FOR PEACE.

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Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel (EAPPI) provides protection by presence, monitors human rights abuses, supports Israeli and Palestinian peace activists and advocates for an end to the occupation.



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THE REV PROFESSOR PAUL FOSTER  
PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT,  
LANGUAGE LITERATURE AND  
THEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH



### A spiritual constant in my life.

I arrived in Edinburgh twelve years ago from the south; when I say the south I do not just mean the south of England where I had been immediately prior to coming to Scotland, but rather before that from Australia – which definitely counts as the south!

My time in Edinburgh has been varied, from being Warden at Pollock Halls (University of Edinburgh Student Accommodation), my academic work at New College, to my role as non-stipendiary priest at St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh.

My involvement in the Cathedral, for example in preaching and pastoral care, has echoes in my other roles, such as my teaching at New College, or being called late at night to see a distraught student in Pollock Halls.

St Mary's Cathedral has been a spiritual constant in my life, but not an unchanging constant. There has been much that has changed and evolved, that reflects growth and responsiveness. While some members have been there the whole time, others have come and gone. Of course it is possible to remember the packed Christmas and Easter services, however, the real life and growth is carried out Sunday by Sunday, week by week. ●



THE REV MARION CHATTERLEY  
CHAPLAIN, WAVERLEY CARE



### From baptism to theological training – 10 short years.

Christmas 1984 and I was on a journey of spiritual exploration. I'd moved away from the Judaism of my childhood and, after a foray into Eastern spirituality, I found myself at Old St Paul's in Edinburgh. The splendour and the colours and the candles and the rhythm of the service had enough resonance from the synagogue experiences of my childhood to feel comfortable and before I knew it I was a regular attendee.

September 1985 – my 4 month daughter and I arrive at Church for our Baptism. This feels like an enormous step along a path that is unknown but very exciting. Most importantly, it's a path that feels right – I've encountered Jesus on my journey and my life has been changed.

Fast forward 10 years to September 1995 and I am one of the new intake at TISEC (the theological institute at that time). God has called me to ordained ministry, the church has recognised that call and I am about to start training.

Those ten years passed quickly, and yet were filled with riches beyond my imagination. I discovered that I love liturgy, that I love silence, that I love responsorial psalms. I found new ways to pray. Most importantly, I discovered that I am loved and valued by God and that I can share something of that love and Grace with the people I meet.

Ten years of blessings. Ten years of growth. My first ten years in The Scottish Episcopal Church. ●



THE VERY REV DR EMSLEY NIMMO  
RECTOR, ST MARGARET'S CHURCH,  
ABERDEEN AND DEAN OF THE DIOCESE  
OF ABERDEEN AND ORKNEY



### Walking with St Moluag!

In the last ten years there has been a definite 'drop-off' in attendance of young people in church. Everyone has noticed it, and everyone is bemoaning it! The universal cry is..... *'They're just nae interested!'*

Last year, in the first half of May one of the younger members of St Margaret's Vestry (they are nearly all younger than me!) and myself went on pilgrimage from Aberdeen Cathedral to Lismore Cathedral retracing the steps of St Moluag, who had founded the Diocese of Aberdeen in 566 AD at Mortlach, Dufftown.

We didn't just walk, we sailed, aided and supported by Sea Cadet Units across the North of Scotland. The exercise was threefold - bring St Moluag out from the shadows and give him his rightful prominent place in the history of early Christian mission in Scotland; to raise monies for the renovation of St Andrew's Cathedral Aberdeen and to engage with youngsters. In the end we greatly raised St Moluag's profile, £14,000 was collected for the Cathedral and we met lots of youngsters.

It was a classic opportunity to engage the young with the history of this country and to talk about the importance of Christian faith in our culture, and believe me they wanted to know the story. One way in which we can engage with youngsters is to be involved in chaplaincy like schools or the Sea Cadets. If young people don't come to us then we have to go to them. ●

## The Scottish Episcopal Institute (SEI) – forming people for ministry

The Rev Canon Anne Tomlinson

Our Church's new training agency will be officially launched later this year and much more will be written then about this exciting development. But here's a trailer:

### The new

- As its strap-line indicates, SEI will prepare people for licensed ministry as Lay Readers and Clergy. By means of seminars, reflection groups and residential events in community, women and men will be shaped into competent and confident public ministers of the Gospel. SEI will oversee their formational pathway from the first stirrings of discerning a call right through to the first three years in public ministry.
- But it will also encourage the Church as a whole to become 'a learning community', sharing educational resources more widely than simply amongst the student cohort, and supporting the development of other recognised lay ministries for mission.
- It will make widespread use of digital communication and social media, ensuring equal access to educational resources across the Province.
- It will enable congregations to become deeply involved in the training of ministers 'on site' as part of their Field Education studies.
- It will seek to enrol younger candidates for fulltime ministry, supporting them through their university studies.
- It will develop new methods of missional leadership for ministry in Scotland today.
- It will encourage student exchanges, widening people's experience of the Anglican and Porvoo Communions.



### The who

These developments will be rolled out by four staff members based in the General Synod Office and by a wider faculty of ancillary teachers and diocesan accompaniers. The core staff will comprise:

- **Rev Canon Anne Tomlinson, Principal.** Anne will teach the Field Education component and be responsible for residential events and pastoral oversight. As a Vocational Deacon she is keen to help the Church understand and value a variety of ministries, and offer appropriate training for each.
- **Dr Michael Hull, Director of Studies.** Michael is a new member of SEI's staff, having started in January. Michael, who holds a doctorate in biblical studies, comes to SEI with much experience in theological education and administration. He will teach the New Testament component and be responsible for academic oversight, instruction and validation, and coordinate improvements of SEI's on-site and virtual-learning environments.
- **Rev Canon Alison Peden, Provincial Director of Ordinands.** Alison, together with Diocesan Directors of Ordinands and Vocations Advisers, will guide

and accompany candidates as their vocation unfolds, and as some proceed to formation for authorised ministry. She will be seeking to engage the Church in the quest for ministers to serve the Scottish Episcopal Church and its mission.

- **Denise Brunton, Administrator and the SEI's Protection of Vulnerable Groups Co-ordinator.** Denise has been with the SEC since 1991. She oversees the daily administration, acts as a liaison with students, dispersed SEI staff, as well as the core staff, and co-ordinates the library needs of the students.

Delivery of the other taught components will be done by subject specialists from across Scotland. Candidates will be accompanied locally by Diocesan Advisors who will help them integrate the disparate parts of the learning experience.

### You

The Institute is the Church's training agency. Please

- make use of its resources
- discern and encourage tomorrow's leaders
- help to shape trainees who are placed in your congregation or locality
- pray for all involved in SEI ●



# LOVE AND MARRIAGE...?

The Rev John McLuckie

**ONE of the very positive things that has come from our current discernment about our Church's response to the change in civil law to allow same-sex marriages is the opportunity to think again, from first principles, about what our theology of marriage is.** Some have voiced concern about fundamental changes to our traditional understanding of marriage, but the more I consider this question, the more it seems to me that we have been on a trajectory in our theology of marriage for a very long time. Indeed, it seems likely to me that Christian theology of marriage is always developing as we discover more and more about what it is to be a human person in a committed relationship with another. In our own church, the publication of our new marriage rite in the last decade has been a key moment in that development and what follows is very much a personal reflection on this theological journey.

So, in the light of that new liturgy, and the development in understanding it represents, I want to think about some of the key aspects of what it means to think theologically

about marriage. I don't want to start from specific biblical precedents.

The few texts that treat marriage are well-known and contested so I want, instead, to think about a more fundamental theological principle: what is the nature of God and how can human relationships reflect that nature?

One answer to that question is given in the introductions to our current marriage liturgies which, in keeping with our evolving understanding of committed human relationships, give primacy to our response to the love of God. Marriage speaks of the nature of God as love because it is founded on love and, to paraphrase the letters of John, the love we have towards God and the love we have towards others are the same love. They are inseparable and intimately connected. God's love is shown to us in Jesus to be sacrificial, generous, forgiving, joyful, healing, faithful. God's love as shown to us in the Trinity as mutual, creative, communal, dynamic, transformative. A marriage can reflect these aspects of divine love through a committed, generous covenant

which is, by its nature, life-creating. In an understanding of marriage that puts these characteristics first, the procreation of children is one aspect of its life-creating nature, but not a defining characteristic. A marriage can also be life-creating in many other ways. For example, a marriage can bring to birth a new human community in a household, whatever its composition. In my own family, my grandparents' generation was not unusual in offering a family life to a friend's child after that child's mother had died in childbirth. Parenthood is not confined to biological reproduction. And we can see how a committed relationship brings new realities to birth in each of its partners – one life drawing previously undiscovered things out of another.

So our thinking about marriage has already begun to see the nature of God's love as foundational and other characteristics as dependent on that foundation. But there is another, less prominent characteristic of the nature of God that is present in our marriage liturgy and which might also prove to be capable of shedding new light on our understanding of the call to a



married life. And that is the language of unity. This is a very traditional understanding of marriage which is also present in our Prayer Book liturgy – it is a union that is reflective of the union between Christ and his Church.

In recent years, the churches have been giving a lot of attention to the call to unity. The ecumenical movement has an obvious interest in this call and a recent, significant document from the World Council of Churches (WCC) expresses that call clearly. In the Unity Statement adopted at the WCC's Assembly in 2013, unity is seen as God's call for the whole creation and the unity of the churches should be seen as being in the service of that greater unity. The unity of God's creation is our most pressing concern as we face violent conflict based on divisions of human creation and alienation from the rest of creation through our careless exploitation of the earth's resources. The more we emphasise difference, the harder it is to overcome division. The realisation of our common humanity, of our unity, is nothing less than an insight into the very nature of God's creation and, therefore, the nature of God.

MARRIAGE SPEAKS OF THE NATURE OF GOD AS LOVE BECAUSE IT IS FOUNDED ON LOVE... THE LOVE WE HAVE TOWARDS GOD AND THE LOVE WE HAVE TOWARDS OTHERS ARE THE SAME LOVE. THEY ARE INSEPARABLE AND INTIMATELY CONNECTED.

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So the union that we express in marriage can also be seen as part of our fundamental human vocation to realise the true nature of the life that is God's gift to us. And if that reconciled unity, which Christ's gift to us in 'a creation restored by love' (Scottish Liturgy 1982) is based on the most basic level of shared humanity, the question of sexual differentiation in marriage is seen in a different light. This is not to deny our human diversity, but to say that our differences are secondary, our unity primary. Unity must be expressed where there is sexual differentiation, but that differentiation is not essential to unity. If we elevate any of our wonderfully varied human characteristics so that they have status

above our common humanity, we inadvertently create the conditions for value judgements based on these characteristics. Marriage can express our human unity beyond racial difference. In the marriage of people of the same sex, might it not be that we are also beginning to see, in sacramental form, our God-given human unity beyond sexual difference?

In the last decade, our Church has expressed its evolving understanding of God's love demonstrated in our committed married relationships. In the decade to come, might we see our evolving understanding of the unity of God the Holy Trinity expressed in a new way in the marriages we celebrate? ●

# THE DIOCESE OF BRECHIN



Bishop Nigel at a *Saints & Sinners – Meet the Bishop* event



## Fit for the 21st Century

The Diocese of Brechin is the Scottish Episcopal Church in the City of Dundee, Angus, the Mearns and Carse of Gowrie – the area between Perth and Aberdeen. Steeped in the Episcopalian faith from the eighteenth century persecution period – immortalised in the iconic painting ‘Baptism from Stonehaven Jail’, reproductions of which are found throughout Scotland – the diocese grew rapidly under Bishop Alexander Penrose Forbes 1847-76. Today this compact diocese has 30 churches and chaplaincies, served by a team of fifty clergy and Lay Readers.

The Rt Rev Dr Nigel Peyton, Bishop of Brechin appreciates the challenges and opportunities facing his diocese, “we are tackling decline, trying to re-imagine each church. Our churches are often well located and those which are growing in numbers and outreach interpret their context well and tend to do things differently.”

## Doing Church Differently

The Centre of Mission in Dundee is a collaboration between the Diocese and Church Army, a UK-wide

Anglican mission society specialising in evangelism. Based at two very different worship centres, St Luke’s Downfield, an outer estate church which had virtually died, and St Paul’s, a thriving city centre Cathedral, it is reaching people in fresh ways.

Led by Priest Missioner Rev Kerry Dixon, the Centre of Mission was launched last autumn and much encouraged by a recent visit from the Archbishop of Canterbury, as part of his visit to the Scottish Episcopal Church. Archbishop Justin Welby described the St Luke’s café church approach as, “inspirational, this is exactly what the Church should be doing, welcoming everyone.” Bishop Nigel hopes that the Centre of Mission “will become infectious, inspiring new initiatives for growth and outreach across the diocese.”

## Out and About with the Bishop

What football team do you support? What’s the worst thing that’s ever happened to you? Why do you believe in God anyway? These are just some of the questions posed when Bishop Nigel pitched up recently with Church Army Pioneer Evangelist Craig

Dowling in a couple of pubs to chat with local people.

Advertised as *Saints & Sinners – Meet the Bishop*, the two evenings attracted a keen interest in both Arbroath and Dundee. The event at the Downfield Hotel in Dundee featured interviews, questions and answers with the Bishop, live music and food. Paula Batard, landlady of The Old Brewhouse and member of St Mary’s Arbroath, commented, “it’s a great idea, like Jesus taking his message to where people socialise”.

Bishop Nigel says, “I felt a need to keep Lent out and about, and people have responded warmly to the opportunity. Folk do have concerns for the serious side of life and are curious about Faith, God and Church - there have been some challenging and moving encounters.”

In addition to the pub evenings, Bishop Nigel spent an afternoon serving customers at the Rainbow Charity Shop run by St Andrew’s Church in Brechin and visited Clepington Primary School in Dundee engaging with the youngsters in a lively classroom session about people’s jobs.

Bishop Nigel also enjoyed “a demanding and eye-opening” late Saturday night out in city pubs & clubs with Dundee’s Street Pastors, an ecumenical team who convey an open-minded concern for the customers and staff of Dundee’s vibrant nightlife.

On Maundy Thursday Bishop Nigel and Provost Jeremy Auld are hosting a special lunchtime Soup & Soul with Dundee’s rough sleepers on the steps of St Paul’s Cathedral - a variation on the traditional Holy Week foot-washing ministry which in previous years has seen them cleaning shoes in the busy City Square, including those of the iconic Desperate Dan statue.

#### Children’s minds

“By taking children out of the liturgy to do ‘stuff’ elsewhere in our church buildings, have we over the last two generations broken the link in children minds between what adults do in Church on a Sunday and what they do?”

The Rector of Montrose and Inverbervie, The Rev Samantha Ferguson has been considering this question afresh. “Is it any wonder that many children, once they reach teenage years have no idea what

sitting through the whole of our beautiful liturgy every single Sunday actually feels like? And more to the point, why would they want to be a part of something they have been excluded from?”

Sam’s two congregations require different approaches for children. “Like many churches we do not know whether we will have no children, 3 or even as many as 15! Each week is a surprise and can be very much hit and miss. But there is no excuse for not being prepared to welcome whoever comes in through our doors. All this takes is time, a little bit of thought and access to Google. At St Mary & St Peter’s Montrose, I am blessed in having a couple of wonderful ladies who have nurtured and sustained our Young Church. In regular meetings we support each other sharing ideas and plans for the coming month.”

“Whilst at the moment we still take the children out at the beginning of the main Sunday morning service, we also have a regular All Age Worship Communion Service on the first Sunday of every month. This was well established and well supported before I arrived and we often have a social lunch event afterwards. The children stay in the church throughout

the whole service and are fully part of it through readings, intercessions and helping me tell the rest of the congregation what the Gospel reading was all about that day. The service is a simple form of communion that all can follow whatever age.”

“When not in church throughout the children are encouraged to tell us what they have been up to in their time together. We also always make sure that they tell us any news especially if birthdays are happening that week! Any excuse for cake, candles and singing. What we do each week isn’t radical but sustainable and loving.”

What happens during the week is also key. Being a visible presence, always in her clerical collar, Sam has quickly become known to the staff and students of Montrose Academy, the primary school associated with St Mary & St Peter’s and the local independent school, through assemblies, seasonal events and regular social contact over their lunch-hour. “We are fortunate in that our church in Montrose is used as a gathering point for School services. Being a welcoming and familiar face at these events is vital and, for me, a sheer joy”. ●



St. Mary & St. Peter, Montrose



The Archbishop of Canterbury speaks with local school pupils during his visit to St Luke’s café church

THIS COMPACT DIOCESE HAS 30 CHURCHES AND CHAPLAINCIES, SERVED BY A TEAM OF FIFTY CLERGY AND LAY READERS.

”

# LIVING BY THE RULE

The Rev Andrew Bain  
Chaplain, Emmaus Community of St Benedict, Edinburgh

**LAST year we had the pleasure of welcoming members of the Chemin Neuf (New Way) Community for a brief visit to Emmaus House in Edinburgh.** This is the same community which the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, invited to join him at Lambeth Palace almost immediately after his arrival. Four members of this mainly Catholic, but ecumenical, family consist of one Anglican couple, a Catholic vowed sister, and a Lutheran ordinand. Whilst there has long been a presence of the religious life at Lambeth, this means there is now a new expression of that life at this significant focal point for world Anglicanism. More recently Archbishop Justin followed this up with a further initiative, namely an invitation for young people from across the Communion to live at Lambeth for a year to experience this new form of religious life, now named the "Community of St Anselm", guided by a newly appointed Prior, a young Anglican priest from Sweden, and an additional sister from Chemin Neuf.

This bold initiative might seem unexpected; however, it seems to be symptomatic of an increasing desire to "search out the old paths" (Jer 6:16). Many Christians now seek ways to live out faith and discipleship in more intentional ways. There is a growing demand for spiritual accompaniment, with more and more people looking for some kind of "soul friend" with whom the joys and challenges of life can be shared. New experiments in creating community are springing up as people seek out fellow disciples to walk this intentional journey with them, finding that support, accountability and common prayer can really make a difference in living out our commitments – in other words enabling the Christ-life to flourish in each of us.

Whether you call this "fresh expressions", "new monasticism" or what you will, there is in fact little that's new about this. These are indeed "old paths" we're treading again. The pattern of regular prayer for those of us who don't live in monasteries will, of course, be different from the pattern of

prayer for monks and nuns who do. Nevertheless, the aim of holding the day in prayer, allowing prayer and a sense of sacredness to permeate all we do work just as meaningfully in new communities, families, little groups of friends who commit to pray together, as they do in convents. This new religious life, then, looks to live out what are very ancient charisms: prayer, hospitality, study, recreation, love for creation – a balanced life in what can seem like a crazy and frantic world.

This balanced and intentional way of living, with a measure of accountability to supportive friends, is enabled by a Rule of Life. Christians have often devised such rules for themselves or adopted modified forms of monastic ones, and the rule is seen not as a straitjacket to hem us in or constrain us in any way, but as a constant inspiration to reach for a fuller life in Christ.

Again the source could hardly be more ancient. Benedict's first words in his Rule: "Listen my child to the teachings of your master and incline the ear of your heart" invite us into



that deep attentiveness in which the voice of God and the presence of God are to be found in everything and everyone. For Benedict nothing is "ordinary"; rather everything is charged with the sacred. The tools of the monastery are to be treated just as the sacred vessels of the altar; the youngest novice is to be listened to as much as the most experienced monk. The tone of the Rule is generous and balanced. "The strong should be given something to strive for and the weak nothing to intimidate them". It is intentional Christianity taken to the max, a school of holiness for everyone. It is utterly realistic. Benedict modestly says this is a "little rule for beginners", but he has an unshakeable conviction that it works. Live this way and a joyful Christian life is within our reach, he says.

After a number of years of living with Benedict's rule, a fledgling new community has emerged in the Diocese of Edinburgh, with encouragement from both the Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) and the Rt Rev Brian Smith (former Bishop of Edinburgh) before him. The Emmaus Community of St Benedict has grown out of the Rhythm in Daily Life groups begun at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield, and the evolving community life at Emmaus House. The small group of founding members (some seven of us) live across the city in our own homes, but gather regularly for prayer and mutual support and to encourage each other in the living of our own very modest Rule. Whilst it certainly is modest, the commitments it contains are intended to help us reach for that balanced and fuller life and to both stretch and inspire us along the way. Our Rule looks like this:

"In fellowship with my brothers and sisters in the Emmaus Community

THIS NEW RELIGIOUS LIFE, THEN, LOOKS TO LIVE OUT WHAT ARE VERY ANCIENT CHARISMS: PRAYER, HOSPITALITY, STUDY, RECREATION, LOVE FOR CREATION – A BALANCED LIFE IN WHAT CAN SEEM LIKE A CRAZY AND FRANTIC WORLD.

”

of St Benedict, I will keep the following Rule of Life each day:

- Set aside time for prayer, including prayer for family and friends, for Emmaus Community of St Benedict brothers and sisters, for the Church and for the World
- Read from scripture or from some other sacred or spiritual text
- Do something for someone else
- Do something for my own self: body, mind or spirit
- Treat my family life and my daily work as my main Christian ministries
- Seek the holy in everyday tasks and duties
- Try to see Christ in everyone I meet" ●

If you would like to know more or to share in this new initiative, then enquire through [www.ecsb.org.uk](http://www.ecsb.org.uk). We'll be delighted to hear from anyone interested in both present and future expressions of religious community life in the Scottish Episcopal Church. Archbishop Justin commended this search for a new exploring of the old paths with these words:

"If we want to see things changed, it starts with prayer. It starts with a new spirit of prayer, using all the traditions, ancient and modern. When it comes, it will be linked to what has gone before, but it will look different – because it is a new renewal for new times. God's created community is perfectly designed for its time and place. It almost always comes from below. It comes from Christians seeking Christ." ●





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# CREDIT UNIONS – PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Donald Urquhart, President of Capital Credit Union

**IN recent months there has been considerable attention focused on credit unions as a viable solution to the challenges facing many people who find themselves in difficulty, particularly with payday and other predatory lenders.** The Archbishop of Canterbury's comments in relation to credit unions replacing the major payday lender Wonga attracted a significant amount of publicity and the Scottish Government's '12 Days of Debtmas' campaign in December 2013 contributed to increasing the focus on credit unions without necessarily clarifying for many exactly what a credit union is. Did you know that 1 in 20 people in Scotland is a member of a credit union?

As someone who has been a volunteer at a credit union for over 22 years and who has been involved in the Credit Union Sector locally, nationally and internationally, the phrase 'best kept secret in the financial services sector' is a recurring theme and when I advise people that I am a director of a credit union, the most common response is 'what's a credit union?' so I am going to try and answer the question for you and, in doing so, I might shed some light on the 'best kept secret'.

## Financial Co-operative

A credit union is a member-owned financial cooperative, democratically controlled by its members, and operated for the purpose of promoting thrift, providing credit at competitive rates, and providing other financial services to its members. Many credit unions also provide services intended to support community development locally or sustainable international development on a national level. Credit unions offer many of the same financial services as banks, but often using a different terminology, such as members rather

than customers and surplus rather than profit.

## The 'Common Bond'

A credit union's customers are its members and it can only offer services to members. This is primarily because credit unions are co-operatives. However, in the UK it is also a legislative requirement contained within the Credit Union Act 1979, the principle piece of legislation applying to credit unions in the UK. To be a member you must meet the 'common bond' criteria set by the credit union, that is you must satisfy the membership requirements such as that you live or work in a certain area, belong to a particular organisation or work for a certain employer.

## Promoting responsible lending

Credit unions promote responsible lending and the services they provide should give all members access to:

- Basic banking services – offering members an account that allows them to have access to their savings at any time
- Savings accounts – encouraging members to build up their assets and accumulate savings
- Affordable loans – taking into account the member's personal circumstances, payment history and ability to repay the loan
- Financial education and access to money advice - empowering members to make informed choices about financial products
- Insurance products – enabling members to build on and protect their assets.

Some credit union loans will cost you no more than 1% a month on the reducing balance of the loan (an APR of 12.7%), many credit unions charge less and some may charge more dependent on a risk assessment of the borrower's requirements. Loans

come with no hidden charges and no penalties for repaying the loan early and it is also possible to carry on saving so that by the time you finish repaying the loan your savings would have grown as well.

Credit unions make it easy to save. Even a small amount saved each week will soon mount up.

- Credit unions serve the community so when you invest in your local credit union you know it's your neighbours or colleagues who are benefiting, not outside shareholders
- You can save as much or as little as you like, weekly, monthly or as often as you wish
- Deposit savings at local branches, shops, collection points, by direct debit or directly from your wages
- Credit unions aim to pay a dividend on savings once a year to all members, depending on performance.

## Distribution of profits

The dividends that credit unions distribute to their members means the money stays in the community rather than going to the faceless shareholders of corporates such as banks. Credit Unions are also committed to improving the economic and social well-being of members.

In many credit unions life insurance is included at no extra cost, making it easy to build up a useful nest egg. On the death of a member savings can be doubled by the insurance and paid to whoever the member chooses. (subject to conditions)

## The Rules

Credit unions have a number of clear objectives enshrined in their constitution. These rules are:

- Promoting thrift – members must be encouraged to save as well as borrow
- Providing credit and loan products with fair and reasonable interest rates

- The efficient use and control of members' savings for mutual benefit in order to earn a rate of return (the dividend)
- Educating members to use money wisely, devise a budget and manage their financial affairs
- Members own and control their credit unions

Because credit unions are co-operatives, members have a say in how the credit union is run and the directors are elected from the members, by the members, to represent their interests. Surveys of customers at banks and credit unions have consistently shown a significantly higher customer satisfaction rate with the quality of service at credit unions. Credit unions have historically claimed to provide superior member service and to be committed to helping members improve their financial situation. In the context of financial inclusion credit unions claim to provide a broader range of loan and savings products at a much cheaper cost to their members than do most microfinance institutions.

Almost all Scots are currently eligible to join a credit union and get access to an extensive range of services including a current account, life savings, insurance, cash ISAs and even mortgages. In recognition of the strength of the movement in Scotland and the role credit unions play in offering safe savings, affordable credit and a wide range of financial services to people in communities up and down the country, past and present Scottish Executives have been keen to support the development and growth of credit unions. In 2013, Scottish credit unions received a total of more than £1.3m from the Scottish Government's Third Sector Enterprise Fund which will help credit unions upgrade their facilities, extend their services to a wider range of people, and continue to develop and grow as thriving social enterprises offering a real local, ethical and co-operative alternative to the banks.

#### Distribution of profits

Credit unions distribute their profits to members in dividends and thus the money stays in the community rather



than going to faceless shareholders. They are also committed to improving the economic and social well-being of members.

#### External Regulation and Scrutiny

In the UK, Credit Unions are regulated in the same way as banks, building societies and other financial deposit takers through the Treasury's Prudential Regulation Authority and the Financial Conduct Authority. The members' savings are also protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme to the same extent as they are for other financial services institutions.

#### Credit Unions in the Wider Financial Picture

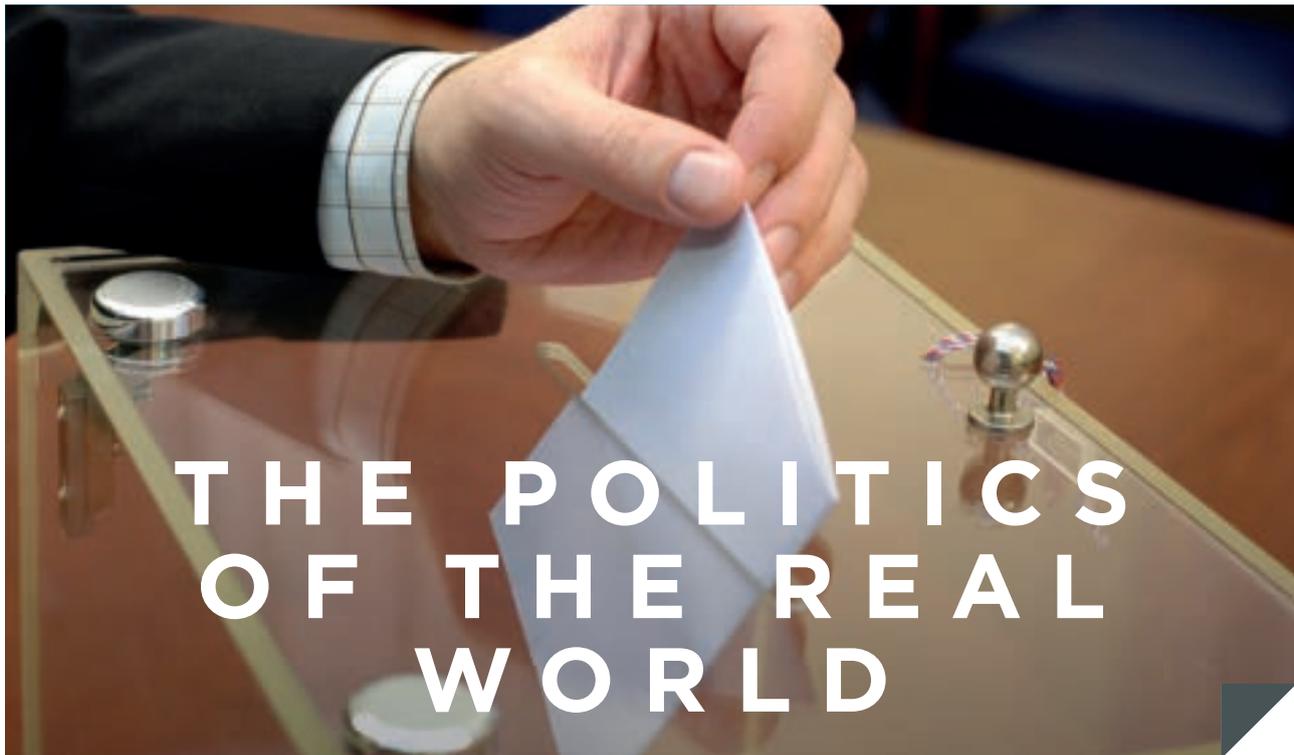
At a time when the challenges of the economic meltdown are still facing most of us, the difficulties in which many people find themselves in relation to making ends meet are very well publicised in a variety of ways. For many, the economic recovery is somewhat illusory and the policies of austerity that most of us (although not all) have all experienced have been based on the stigmatisation of sections of the population and the dissemination of misinformation, much of it for political reasons.

However, a quick examination of some reliable and reputable sources (the World Bank, Oxfam, the Child Poverty Action Group) provide some pretty harsh facts that make us all sit up and think:

- 13 million people live below the poverty line in the UK
- In 2012/2013, foodbanks fed nearly 350 000 people, almost 130 000 of whom were children

- More than 3.5 million children (27%) in the UK are living in poverty
- Two-thirds of children living in poverty are in families where at least one adult works
- Child poverty is projected to rise from present levels if current policies don't change
- The average full-time pay of the CEO of a Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 company in 2012 was £4.3 million while the average wage of a UK worker was £26 500, a multiplier of more than 160
- The wealth of the richest one percent of people in the world amounts to \$110 trillion, 65 times the total wealth of the bottom half of the world's population
- Almost half of the world's wealth is now owned by just one percent of the population
- The richest 85 people in the world own as much as the bottom 50% of the world's population.

What has all this to do with Credit Unions? Well those of us actively involved in credit unions believe that credit unions and, indeed, a cooperative approach to business and finance in general, can be the solution to many of the problems facing our society today, particularly wealth inequality. Indeed, in many other parts of the World (the Philippines, the Caribbean and countries in South and Central America), credit unions and similar microfinance approaches have been at the heart of a number of very positive developments that have addressed poverty and financial exclusion brought about by significant proportions of the population being underserved or not served at all by the mainstream financial services such as banks. ●



Justin Reynolds

**THE rusting garden gate refuses to yield. I push, hard as I dare, and force myself through.**

Rain water pooled on overhanging leaves spills and runs down my neck. As I crunch up the path I glimpse a figure peering out of a first floor window. I ring the bell. A distant radio plays. As I half expect no-one comes to the door.

I find a suitable angle of attack to force the bespattered leaflet through the bristling draught excluder. It is late afternoon. There are only 30 more houses on the list.

And I ask myself again: why am I, a pale introvert, a creature of books and coffee shops, out here, on another Saturday, canvassing for a political party. It's a good question. This piece is my latest attempt to answer it.

I'm not a complete novice. I've long been interested in politics. Indeed I studied it at university. But I should emphasise the word 'studied': brief exposure to the intrigues of student politics was sufficient to provoke some distaste for the hard realities of political campaigning.

Those of a more pragmatic disposition enjoyed the rough and tumble. But I soon found that I was rather better at thinking about how to change the world than actually attempting in some small measure to do so.

Ideas, books and seminars I could handle: esoteric political philosophies,

clear, logical policy programmes, utopian visions. Politics as science fiction. And that inclination for the abstract guided my subsequent path towards a career some way from the tangled business of politics.

I'm now working as a digital designer, immersed in a rational universe of disciplined grids, cursive typefaces, shimmering gradients, subdued colour palettes, crisp photography and smooth vectors. All framed within the neat rectangle of a softly glowing computer screen. A defined world whose elements can be snapped into shape to form perfect compositions. Or to put it in theological terms, a realm of pure spirit, unstained by matter, agreeable to those, like myself, of a gnostic disposition.

So how did this particular 21st century gnostic end up stuffing soggy political leaflets into recalcitrant letterboxes?

Well, any idealist who has not quite given up on the hope that another world is possible, whose utopianism hasn't decayed into cynicism, is a kind of latent activist.

I have tried, but I cannot agree with the pessimist that things are as they are because that is just the way of things. If we can imagine something perhaps we can at least try to realise it. I have never quite given up the hope that the world can be fixed, that progress is possible, in spite of everything.

The problem is of course that it just seems so downright hard. So I stayed in front of my computer screen, with my books. Easier by far to look on, commenting on the efforts of others.

I can find all kinds of rationalisations for my decision a couple of years ago to finally get out and do something, but a curious little episode sticks in the mind.

While idly browsing a bookshop my eye was caught by a chapter heading: 'Idiotism'. Reading on, I learned that the word was coined by the ancient Athenians to refer to the status of a private citizen disinclined to engage in the public life of the city state. Their 'idiocy' consisted not in their low intelligence, but in their passivity: a preparedness to leave the business of democracy to others, to do their own thing, to tend their own gardens.

Interesting, I thought, and continued browsing. But as I stepped out of the shop I realised the term described me perfectly: someone who takes the time to be well informed, who notes the world's failings, who complains about 'them', the 'political class', and yet who does nothing.

Yes, I thought, that's me: an idiot. And I knew the label would stick till I turned my eyes away from the newspaper and did something.

So I joined a party. I turned up for meetings and put my name down

SO I JOINED A PARTY. I TURNED UP FOR MEETINGS AND PUT MY NAME DOWN FOR THINGS. AND I WAS PLEASED TO FIND THERE IS STILL SOME OPPORTUNITY TO PHILOSOPHISE: THERE ARE POLICIES TO DEBATE, OPINION PIECES TO WRITE, POINTS OF POLITICAL DOCTRINE OVER WHICH TO AGONISE.

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for things. And I was pleased to find there is still some opportunity to philosophise: there are policies to debate, opinion pieces to write, points of political doctrine over which to agonise.

But the day-to-day business of politics is just that: business. Committee and sub-committee meetings, the adoption of reluctant officebearers, the organisation of fundraisers, the purchase of raffle tickets, the designing of flyers, the setting up of rain sodden marquees, the manning of stalls on windy street corners.

And, above all, canvassing: the sisyphian task of meeting the electorate, the attempt to win the trust of strangers without which nothing else matters, without which the most carefully crafted policy programme is fit only for the recycling bin.

And the process of making contact, even in this digital age, remains resolutely analogue, an almost comically laborious process of knocking on doors, one-by-one, street-by-street, an endless business of cold fingers, missing number plates, barking dogs, broken service buzzers and sepulchral tenement stairwells.

And, of course, people. The summoned occupant, warily peering from behind the door.

Certainly, there is the occasional door slam. A smattering of 'you're-all-

the-same', 'anyone-but-you' and 'not-after-what-you-did-last-time'. But to my pleasant surprise most people are polite, tolerant of being disturbed, and often quite willing to talk, pleased to that effort has been made to solicit their views.

And I don't think it's just a matter of common courtesies. Yes, there's a pervasive disillusionment with mainstream politics, but people still recognise that the business of being canvassed is integral to life in a democracy, to being regarded as a citizen rather than a subject, with the right, and indeed obligation, to be consulted. There's a recognition that our democracy, imperfect as it is, is a gift entrusted to us by previous generations, secured after much struggle.

This, I think, is the very essence of politics: the methodical grind of getting out and speaking to voters, seeking nothing more than to present a party's position accurately, and to leave them to make of it what they will.

To dip into theology again, you might say politics is a thoroughly incarnational business: the clash of a political programme with reality, with the brute fact of a sceptical public that must be persuaded, with infinite pain. A tough stage for idealists.

But they are necessary. The visionary can see the city on a hill towards which political effort strives. For them the challenge is the simple

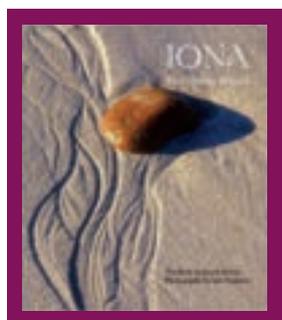
recognition – so simple that it can be hard to see – that the world is not a blank canvas on which a new design can be sketched, or comprised of adaptable building blocks that can be taken apart and reconstructed.

Each new government inherits the world as it is, a fathomless confusion of traditions, prejudices, cultures, institutions and clashing ideologies that must be coaxed and charmed rather than directed. The state isn't a gleaming iMac, awaiting reprogramming. It's more like an old mainframe, a monstrous contraption patched together with thickets of cords and cables that must be painstakingly rewired.

That complexity is the price of democracy. Political reform is hard, compromising and implemented in the teeth of opposition from opponents who will look to reverse it when their time comes around again, as it will. But that is the way of it.

I'm writing this in a notebook, prior to another canvassing session, on a bitter February day, looking out of the cafe window, watching the passers-by on their way back to homes whose peace I may soon be disturbing.

It's drizzling. Mist is obscuring a church spire, and there's a sheen of water on the rooftops. But I can see some light on the horizon, a prospect of brighter weather. I pack up: it will soon be time to start again. ●



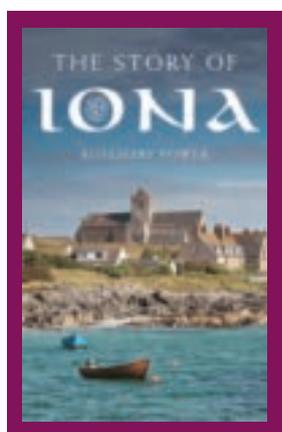
## Iona: The Other Island

Author: Kenneth Steven and Iain Sarjeant

Publisher: St Andrew Press

ISBN: 9780861538300

RRP: £14.99



## The Story of Iona: An illustrated history and guide

Author: Rosemary Power

Publisher: Canterbury Press Norwich

ISBN: 9781848255562

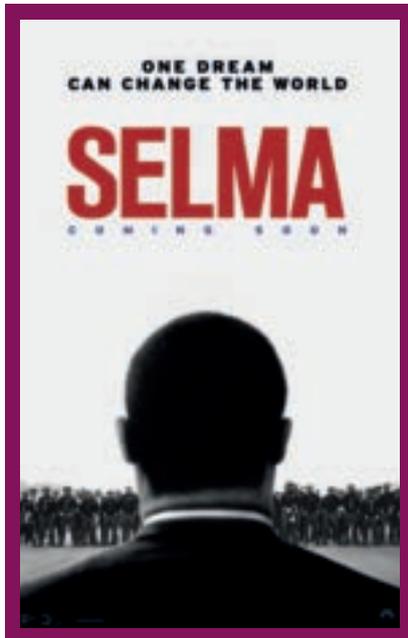
RRP: £12.99

A great many books have been written about Iona and that is unsurprising given the central place that it has had and continues to have in the spiritual life of Scotland and beyond. It does however raise the question as to why we might need more. These books are very different, to most that I have encountered before.

The first offers photographs, prose and poetry to introduce the reader to the riches of Iona, that lie beyond the confines of the restored Benedictine Abbey and the ruined Augustinian Nunnery. In other words it takes us to the places that most visitors to Iona do not find. Iain Sarjeant's photography has a wonderfully spiritual quality to it, whether it is of landscape or of the details of pebbles on the shore, seaweed or patterns in the sand. Both Iain's photography and Kenneth Steven's poetry and prose clearly come from people who have spent a great deal of time exploring Iona, starting with childhood visits and continuing for many years. The book is organised by 19 locations, mostly around Iona's coastline, which are marked on a far from detailed map, although the narrative does provide guidance as to how to find them. This is a well designed book with photography that is well reproduced and would serve as a guidebook for anyone who was spending a few days on the island about which Samuel Johnson wrote: "That man is little to be envied whose piety would not grow warmer amid the ruins of Iona."

The second is very different. In the first half of her book, Rosemary Power takes her reader on an historical journey. She sketches what Iona might have looked like to the visitor before Columba, during the Columban period and in each century up until the Middle Ages. What she is trying to help the visitor to Iona to do, is to read into the landscape and the historical remains what they might have encountered in each period. The second half does much the same for the period of the Benedictine Monastery and that of the Augustinian Nunnery. There is much detail in her account, but it is never dry or remote. Another well designed book, with many black and white photographs and occasional pieces of poetry from the periods being discussed, which helps to evoke the spirit of the age being considered. This is another useful 'guide' for visitors as from specific vantage points Rosemary describes what one might have seen at particular times, so that one can picture what life might have been like on Iona through its long history of spiritual renewal.

The Rev James Currall



## Selma

Paramount Pictures, Pathé and Harpo Films

“Heartbreaking and inspiring” is how this stunning film about the epic march from Selma to Montgomery and Martin Luther King’s leadership in persuading President Lyndon Johnson to sign the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is best described.

Heartbreak pervades the film. Feelings of utter bewilderment, anger, frustration and fear are experienced through the various characters being portrayed by some superb and compelling acting. It is heartbreaking as juxtapositions between personal and political motivation are played out against a background fuelled with a passionate sense of injustice and ignorance of basic human rights.

Inspiration runs through the two hours through glimpses of hope and moments of triumph. Similarly, poignancy and heartbreak are never far away. The moment when King consoles the grandfather of the murdered activist Jimmie Lee Jackson, killed by white police, hits hard with the words “God was the first to cry” – the emotions of both King and Cager Lee (Henry G. Sanders) in this scene capture all the heartbreak and inspiration that this film so brilliantly portrays.

The ensemble cast produces a united performance that is a true tour de force. David Oyelowo is mesmerising as King, alternately producing the raw power of the man’s public face whilst simultaneously shrinking to smallness in the face of grief or personal shame. The encounter between Martin and Coretta (played by the superb Carmen Ejogo) as she confronts him over his infidelities reveals the man whose layers have been scraped away, the energising speeches reduced to a single word, ‘no’ when asked if he loved any of them. However, there is not a single wasted performance in the entire film.

The film lasts approximately two hours but allow time following it to simply pause and reflect – it has a profound effect on a range of emotions and on how we each have a role in shaping the way others live.

In its own ways, this is a Lenten journey – at once bringing the viewer to inspiration, grief, revulsion, hope. It will challenge and inspire anyone who sees it!

The Rev Chris Mayo



## Support and wisdom needed

The efforts of all those involved with the Scottish Episcopal Institute in breathing life into what was an apparently failing body are to be commended by the whole Church. Staff and students are worthy of support – in prayer and money – by everyone.

However, I think it is a great pity that the Provincial Lent Appeal by the College of Bishops on behalf of the Institute jeopardises the possibility of that support by its blatant ageism. The appeal worded on behalf of “younger candidates...to offer a lifetime of ordained service” lacks any real basis in theology or practise.

Leadership in the early Christian communities was almost exclusively entrusted to those described as “elders”, gifted with wisdom and maturity. They combined knowledge with the experience of life. Over the past three decades the Episcopal Church has taken this to heart in its widespread development and use of non-stipendiary ministry and we perhaps should look more to this ministry for our effective missional leadership for the future.

“Fresh insights and energy” are by no means restricted to “younger candidates”. But wisdom only comes with experience as Bishops should know.

**The Rev Tim Morris**

## Praise for Crematoria

Over the last few years the news media have presented us with ‘horror’ stories about what goes on in crematoria. As a relatively newly ordained priest in the Scottish Episcopal Church, I agreed an early objective with my training Rector that we would visit one or our local crematoria, in order to get a better understanding of how they work and

## Photo Caption competition



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what goes on ‘behind the scenes’. This week, that opportunity arose and we made our visit in the company of one of our local funeral directors, who made the arrangements with the crematorium for us.

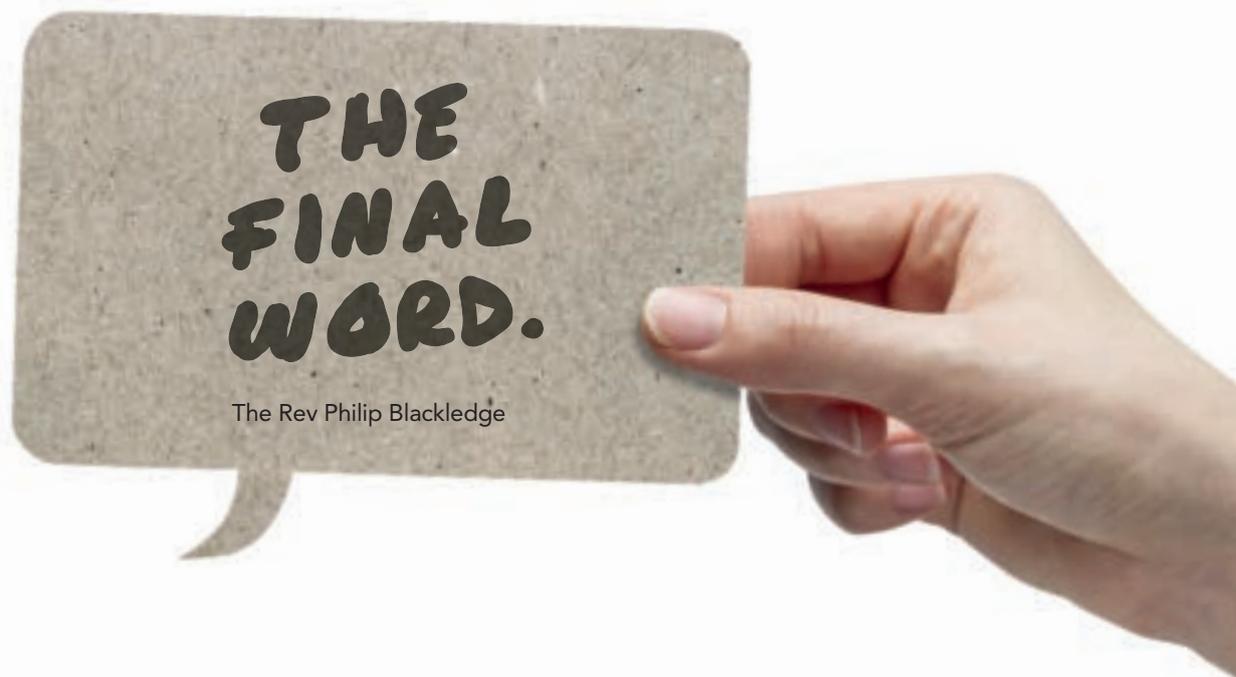
It was a very useful and informative experience. The crematorium staff were very helpful, showing us the whole process from the point at which the coffin disappears from view of the congregation, until the ashes are in the urn, for return to the family or for scattering in the crematorium grounds. I was touched by how caring

and thoughtful all the staff were, whether they were dealing with the family and congregation ‘front of house’ or ‘behind the scenes’ dealing with the more technical aspects.

For my part, I now feel much better equipped to answer the questions that family and friends might have, in a helpful and honest way. Perhaps this sort of visit should be a part of the training of all those who are licenced to take funerals, clergy and lay readers alike?

**The Rev James Curral**

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## RUSSEL BRAND – GOD'S CHIEF POLITICAL SPOKESPERSON

**THERE** was a very interesting exchange about God a few weeks ago. It began with an interview by Stephen Fry, the cuddly, clever, avuncular "National Treasure" of the modern age (some folk have referred to him as "the non-thinking man's thinking man" but that's no reflection on him).

He was being interviewed by the gentle Irish chat show host, Gay Byrne. During that interview, Byrne asked him, "Were you to find yourself at the Pearly Gates, face to face with God, what would you say to him?"

Fry's response was righteous anger. "I'd say - bone cancer in children? What's that about? How dare you! How dare you create a world in which there is so much misery that is not our fault. It's not right, it's utterly utterly evil."

"And you think you're going to get in?" asked Gay Byrne, rather splendidly. Fry's response was that he wouldn't want to be associated in any way with such a God.

That heroic moral stance against God is not new. Many atheists feel

their atheism is based not simply on rationality but on moral grounds. They feel that if God exists, he's horrible, and they don't want anything to do with him.

However, leaping to the defence of us theists was (who'd have thought it) Russell Brand. Younger, thinner and sexier than Stephen Fry, he's also equally funny. If you like your humour on the colourful side.

Brand challenged Fry's theology, philosophy and biblical interpretation. And he and Fry in this debate seem to be mirroring a Zeitgeist which seems to be changing.

Sociologists spoke of the period of the "Great Disenchantment" of the 20th century. Science and empirical evidence became all, and there was no room for mystery. Towards the end of the twentieth century, it seemed as though every question which was worth asking could be answered by empirical evidence and scientific method. We got so good at scientific method that if a question couldn't be answered in this way, we began believing that it wasn't a question worth our time. Peter Atkins, a famous chemist and atheist once told the Duke of Edinburgh "Why questions aren't real questions". To which the Duke replied "Why's that then?" Brilliant.

BRAND CHALLENGED FRY'S THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION. AND HE AND FRY IN THIS DEBATE SEEM TO BE MIRRORING A ZEITGEIST WHICH SEEMS TO BE CHANGING.

However in recent years, the same sociologists have spoken of the "Re-enchantment" of the world. The younger generations, like Brand and others, who have hardly been exposed to any of the traditional religions at all, have found the presence of God, or at least the need for God, all on their own. They reject the idea of empirical evidence being enough, and want to re-imagine the world on a cosmic scale.

This comes with a healthy rejection of dogmas, but with a yearning and a knowledge for God. Just as Fry is representative of the old age of secularism, perhaps Brand, swears, naughty, clever, funny Russell Brand, is a symbol of a world-view to which our Church needs to listen. ●

## APPOINTMENTS

**BAKER**

The Rev Liz Baker appointed Rector at Holy Trinity, Pitlochry; St Andrews, Strathtay; St Adamnan's, Kilmaveonaig and All Saints', Kinloch Rannoch on 8th January 2015.

**BRAUER**

The Rev Thomas Brauer appointed Diocesan Missioner of the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane on 1st February 2015 having resigned as Priest in Charge at St Luke the Evangelist, Glenrothes, St Margaret of Scotland, Leven and Finnian, Lochgelly on 21 January.

**GIBSON**

The Rev Kenneth Gibson appointed Priest in Charge at Holy Trinity, Monifieth on 21st December 2014.

**KING**

The Rev Preb Bob King appointed Rector at St Andrew's, Kelso on 2nd December 2014.

**MACLEAN**

The Rev Canon Allan Maclean appointed Rector at St Vincent's Edinburgh on 22nd January 2015.

**PEDEN**

The Rev Canon Alison Peden appointed Rector at St Modoc's, Doune on 6th March 2015 having resigned as Rector at Holy Trinity, Stirling on 28th February.

**SMITH**

The Rev Canon Jeffrey Smith appointed Rector of St Mary and All Souls, Coldstream on 15th January 2015.

**TAGGART**

The Rev Terry Taggart appointed Priest in Charge at St Peter's, Stornoway and St Moluag's, Eoropaidh, Isle of Lewis on 23rd January 2015.

## RESIGNATION

**CAMPBELL**

The Rev Elizabeth Campbell from Assistant Priest at St James, Stonehaven, St Philip's, Catterline and St Ternan's, Muchalls on 25th January 2015.

**IWUAGWU**

The Rev Chukwuemeka Iwuagwu from Non-Stipendiary Priest at St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow on 15th February 2015.

**KEULEMANS**

The Rev Andrew Keulemans from Rector at St Peter, Musselburgh on 3rd January 2015.

**KILGOUR**

The Very Rev Richard Kilgour from Provost at St Andrew's Cathedral, Aberdeen on 31st January 2014.

**MANDER**

The Rev Canon Peter Mander from Rector at St James the Less, Cruden and St Mary-on-the-Rock, Ellon on 26th January 2015.

**MILNE**

The Rev Canon James Milne from Rector at St Bride, Glasgow on 7th February 2015.

**MORTIS**

The Rev Lorna Mortis from Rector at St Paul & St John the Evangelist, Airdrie on 18th February 2015.

**RICHARDSON**

The Rev Andrew Richardson from Rector at St John the Evangelist, Ballieston, St Kentigern, Dennistoun, and St Serf, Shettleston on 7th February 2015.

## RETIREMENT

**JACKSON**

The Rev Margaret Jackson from Rector at St James', Stonehaven and St Philip's, Catterline, and from Priest in Charge at St Ternan's, Muchall on 16th January 2015.

## DEATHS

**CAMERON**

On 9th December 2014, The Rev Donald Cameron: 1929. Cranmer Hall, Durham 1968-70. D, 1970. P, 1971. C, Holy Trinity, Hull 1970-1973. V, Christ Church, Eaton, Cleveland 1973-1982. R, St Mungo, Balerno 1982-1987. Warrant, Dioc of Edinburgh 2000-2014. Assist P, St Paul & St George, Edinburgh.

**LAWRENSON**

On 26th February 2015, The Rev Michael Lawrenson: 1935. Univ of Leeds BA 1960. Coll of the Resurr Mirfield 1960-1962. Univ of L'pool Cert in Soc Sc 1965. Univ of Newcastle Dip in App Soc Studies 1969. NS Trg 1971-1974. D, 1974. P, 1974. NSM, St Luke's, Glenrothes 1974-1990. Dioc Supernum 1990-1995. Chapl, HM Prison, Perth 1991-1995. Central Fife Team Ministry 1995-2000. Rtd 2000.

**POW**

On 15th January 2015, The Rev Canon Joyce Pow: 1929. SRN. RSCN. RNT. NS Trg 1986-88. St John's Notts Cert in Christian Studies 1988. D, 1988. P, 1994. NSM, St Columba's, Largs 1988-2000. Warrant, Uni Dioc of Glasgow & Galloway. Hon Can, Cath of the Isles, Millport 2009-2015.

**SKELTON**

On 7th December 2014, The Rev Canon Pamela Skelton: 1938. Hull Coll of Ed Teaching Dip 1958-1960. NS Trg 1975-78. Edinburgh Theo Coll 1980-1982. Dss, 1978. D, 1986. P, 1994. Dss-in-C, St Barnabas, Moredun & Edin Youth Org 1982-1991. Assoc Min, Christ Church, Edinburgh 1991-1997 & p/t Episcopal Chapl, Royal Edinburgh Hospital 1992-2005. Hon Can, Edinburgh 2000 - 2014. Warrant, Dioc of Edinburgh 2006-2014.

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