

**St Margaret's
Scottish Episcopal Church
Magazine**

50p

**Christmas issue
December 2011 - January 2012**



Arise, shine, for your light has come (Isaiah 60.1)

THE CHURCH OFFICE

353/355 Kilmarnock Road, Newlands, Glasgow G43 2DS
Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm
0141 636 1131
Church administrator: Miss May Livingstone

CLERGY

Rector: Reverend Scott Robertson BD MA PhD
22 Monreith Road, Newlands, Glasgow G43 2NY
0141 632 3292

Curate: Reverend Maggie McTernan
Flat 0/1, 9 Kennoway Drive, Glasgow G11 7 UA
0141 337 2604



A warm welcome to St Margaret's

Should you wish to speak to the Rector, he is regularly available at the Church on Wednesdays between 6 and 7pm (if the church does not appear to be open, please ring the bell at the left side of the small door to the left of the main West door). Otherwise he can be contacted on 0141 632 3292.

St Margaret's on the internet: www.episcopalnewlands.org.uk
email: stmargaretsnewlands@btinternet.com

Diocesan website: www.scotland.anglican.org/diocese/glasgow

Magazine submissions to stmargaretsnewlands@btinternet.com,
or maidagibson@hotmail.com, marked "Magazine",
or in the drawer marked "Magazine Editor" at the back of the church

Travelling to Bethlehem.....



This Advent we have decided to celebrate the season by adopting the old Czech custom of the Travelling Crib, a symbolic enactment of Mary and Joseph's difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus. A small portable crib will be blessed by Scott at the 10.30 service on 11 December. He will hand it to the members of the congregation who have volunteered to be the first hosts; they then take it to the next volunteers where they and the new hosts will put the crib in a special place, light a candle and conduct a short five minute service. (Service sheets will be provided at the back of the church.)

The new hosts could then offer a small refreshment to finish off the ceremony and can take the opportunity to invite friends and neighbours to take part too. In the past this has been a lovely seasonal coming together - a chance to share the central message of Christmas with people who might not be regular churchgoers. The new hosts will then repeat the ceremony at the house of the next hosts on the list and so on.

The hosts who have the Crib on Christmas Eve will return it to the church at the candlelight service and place it by the altar.

This is a celebration for all age groups, for those who live alone as well as family members. If you would like to take part could you please sign the list at the back of the church and leave your telephone number. I will also leave a copy of the service sheet for people to have a look at.

If you have any questions do give me a ring on 07967 346041.

Jo Sutherland

Index

Pastoral Letter	Page 4	Notes and News	Page 6
AGM Reports	Page 8	You'll Never Walk Alone	Page 12
Calendar and rotas	Page 14	An Odyssey in Israel	Page 16
Reflections on "The Word"	Page 18	Church Garden	Page 19
Elephants ahoy!	Page 20	Editor in the hot seat	Page 22
"Big 5" interview	Page 24	Intercessions / Sudoku	Page 26

Scott writes.....

Whilst the regular calendar is ticking over to the end of yet another year, the church year has only just begun. And we begin pretty much in darkness. That's not just because the clocks have gone forward and 'the nights are fair drawin' in'. There's a broader, deeper darkness that is reflected in the hymns and readings which we share with one another during this nascent period in the church calendar. It is a reminder to us of the darkness that is to be found within each of us, if we are honest enough to look for it. Advent is a time, like Lent, for reflection, and we are asked to reflect upon the nature of sin and the nature of judgement. Not the sort of present that is on everybody's wish-list in the run up to Christmas!



The problem with this darkness is that we can get a bit lost in it. We can assume all is black, that there is nothing redeemable about this 4 week period that leads up to the really good stuff. And it is certainly true that, in the past, the church has overplayed the dark side of human nature, to such an extent that words like 'sin' and 'judgement' have become triggers for all sorts of negative emotions. So we have the counter-argument which goes: 'People get turned off by that stuff, so let's quietly drop it.' But like that annoying relative at Christmastide, Advent just keeps coming around. And it brings with it sin and judgement. How do we deal with this in a way that is actually constructive?

Well, we can start by recognising something approximating to the truth, not what I'd like to imagine is the truth. I am a sinner. I'm not the most evil person who ever lived but neither am I whiter than white. To be reminded of this from time to time doesn't strike me as necessarily brow-beating (although I'm sure there are plenty of clerics who may relish indulging in that!). Rather, like the beginning of the church year itself, recognising this particular truth is a starting point. It's a bit like an artist getting the perspective right before committing himself to the task at hand – the masterpiece. We have to gain that proper perspective in order to develop our own masterpiece – the life that we have been given. And we have to be aware when we caricature our lives by either pretending we are better than we are, or (just as insidiously), worse than we are. The key is to be honest. And Advent gives us this opportunity. It also reminds us that this is real life. We are not just playing at life or religion. These things matter. They make a difference. The poet Edwin Muir had a long and consistent gripe about the way religion can lose touch with the reality it was always

intended to redeem, and he illustrated this in a vivid way in his poem, *The Incarnate One*. Here's a taste of it:

The windless northern surge, the sea-gull's scream,
And Calvin's kirk crowning the barren brae.
I think of Giotto the Tuscan shepherd's dream,
Christ, man and creature in their inner day.
How could our race betray
The Image, and the Incarnate One unmake
Who chose this form and fashion for our sake?

The Word made flesh here is made word again
A word made word in flourish and arrogant crook.
See there King Calvin with his iron pen,
And God three angry letters in a book,
And there the logical hook
On which the Mystery is impaled and bent
Into an ideological argument.

May our Advent journey reflect Muir's desire to put flesh on the bones of mere words, so that, when we ultimately come to celebrate the Christmas season, we do so knowing a little better just how much it cost.

God bless you and keep you.

Scott

Register

"Suffer the little children to come unto me" (Matthew 19.14)

30 October Juliet Elizabeth Mappin



Caring Christmas Trees

Help others again, by buying your tree on line at www.caringchristmastrees.com or by phoning 0845 111 8733. Profits go to help those who have experienced homelessness, are at risk of abuse or who are unable to get a job.

PS - Maggie's Journey

Read about Maggie's journey to Ordination in the latest edition of Inspires, the magazine of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Notes and News

Evensong 30 October

The church rang to the sweet sounds of choral singing on 30 October for an evensong in praise of All Saints Day. For once the congregation outnumbered the choir! They gave us a rousing rendition of EJ Moeran's Magnificat, a reflective rendition of his Nunc Dimittis and an uplifting version of Wood's anthem O Thou the Central Orb, interspersed with Preces and Prayers.



The choir had obviously worked hard to prepare their pieces and was ably conducted by Michael. A simple, but tasty buffet had been prepared and was much enjoyed. It is to be hoped that more people will support future events. *Jim Gibson*

Leprosy Mission Scotland

I would like to thank St, Margaret's members who have contributed to this cause during the year and remind them that Leprosy Sunday is the last Sunday in January 2012. This gives you a chance to recover from Christmas and New Year and have some change saved up! New contributors will be very welcome.

Mattie Davidson

Readers' Rota

At the end of another year, I should like to take this opportunity to thank all of the readers for their co-operation and help.

I shall be preparing next year's rota in the course of December and would be delighted to hear from any members of the congregation who feel that they could serve St. Margaret's by joining the rota of readers. Each reader is called on twice and at most three times a year for Sunday services, and occasionally may be invited to read at additional services. My phone number is 0141-569 7496.

Over the years, each month I have printed copies of the readings for those involved. It seems to me that it would make more sense now to send these electronically, and so I would ask all current readers to send me their e-mail address as soon as possible, please. My own address is joan.girling@virginmedia.com. I shall, of course, be pleased to continue to make copies for anyone who doesn't have a computer.

Joan Girling, Readers' Rota Convener

Thanks from Connie

Now that I am handing over the organisation of the Magazine teams to Prue Clark, I would like to thank you all for your faithful service to this task. I have never been let down even in the worst of weather. To all those of you who have been doing the task for a long time and to the more recent members, my best thanks. *Connie Fowler*

(And many thanks to you Connie for the seamless way in which you have organised things behind the scenes for so many years - Ed)

Visitor from Sri Lanka

Linda and I were very lucky to have Debbie Edirisinghe Director of Child Action Lanka (CAL) visit with us for couple of days on 28 October. Her trip was organised by The Epiphany Trust who also support her work with Street Children in Kandy. We at Sukhita Child were first introduced to CAL on the recommendation of Canon Paul Watson, now at St Devenick's in Aberdeen, and while I was in Sri Lanka back in 2010 I saw firsthand the commitment and hard work shown by Debbie and all her team in trying to support, educate, feed and clothe all those still living on the streets.



I hope that when Debbie joined us at 10.30 worship in St Margaret's on Sunday 31 October the congregation managed to introduce themselves and get the opportunity to meet this very special lady; after all it is only by your generosity we were able to hand over a cheque for £1,700 which will go a long way back in Sri Lanka. To learn more about this and other projects please visit our website www.sukhitachild.org.

John Fisher

Of clothing and choristers.....

Dorothy Williamson writes:

Bunty McSkimming, one of the older members of the congregation, has knitted 25 articles of clothing to go with the gifts to youngsters in the East End of Glasgow. She has also offered to continue knitting if wool is supplied to her. If anyone has wool which they are not going to use and are happy to pass it on to Bunty would you please put it in a bag with my name on it and leave it on the seat at the back of the church and I will take it to her. Very many thanks in anticipation and also to Bunty for a tremendous effort.

and Bunty has written to the Treasurer looking back on a century of service:

“Enclosed please find a donation for the Organ Appeal Fund. My Dad won a prize for one year's perfect attendance in the Choir in 1911 - I can't believe that is 100 years ago. He and his two brothers were all members of the choir, and always told how Canon Petrie gave any chorister who had 5 years perfect attendance a gold watch. However with the 3 brothers coming up to the 5 year mark, the custom was cancelled!

I met my husband when he joined the choir at the invitation of Mr Porkiss, the organist at the time (1949/50). Mr Porkiss taught music at Belmont House School in Newton Mearns, where my husband was PE Teacher. My son and daughter were also choir members for several years, so the choir and organ have a special place in my heart.”

AGM Report - 20 November 2011

The various reports for the year, from the Vestry, the Treasurer, the Lay Representative, the South Side Regional Council and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups, having been circulated in advance, were approved. Fiona Campbell, Richard McIndoe and Adrian Osmond were appointed as Vestry members, Jim Gibson was appointed as Lay Representative in succession to Jan Whiteside, and Eileen Smith and Jenny Whelan were reappointed as People's and Rector's Wardens.

Scott encouraged us to see change as something positive, stressed the importance of the work of the Vestry, updated us on the process regarding the organ refurbishment and explained the thinking behind the Diocesan Growth Strategy, which aimed to help us "become what we are", a people united in love and service for Christ. Jenny thanked Scott for all his work amongst us in the last year, for being himself and leading us by example.

Abbreviated versions of the Vestry Report and the Treasurer's Report are reproduced below. Complete versions of all reports are available on the website.

Vestry Report

This August saw the Rector complete his first year in office. This has been a time of change, with our associate priest, Rev. Paul Romano, taking up post as Rector of St. Ninian's, Pollokshields and Rev. Maggie McTernan joining us as Curate.

Worship

Worship remains central to St. Margaret's. In addition to the midweek Eucharist and the two Sunday services, the lay-led all-age worship service has become a permanent form of worship as the Sunday First service, now taking place every two months. The "Time to Remember" service is again a unique development, providing a safe space to remember and cherish those loved and lost. We participate in hospital services at the Victoria Infirmary, and the introduction of Housegroups and Reading Groups works to further the Church's aim of advancement of religion.

Profile

St. Margaret's has striven to increase its profile in the wider community, through the use of print and electronic media. The Church website has been revamped and features news on upcoming events and details on what St. Margaret's has to offer to visitors. Through the website we receive enquiries on diverse matters such as baptisms and weddings as well as requests to visit and view the rich architectural heritage that is our charge. We have a presence on Facebook, and the Church Magazine has gone from strength to strength, featuring content of relevance to all. Ten issues are produced per year, in print format and also available on the website.

Music & Culture

Music has such a presence at St. Margaret's. In addition to the wealth of musical talent within the Congregation, we have as our Director of Music one of the foremost choir conductors and organists in the country. Under his direction, the Choir continues to flourish, rightly deserving its reputation. The Second Sunday concerts continue to be a regular fixture. The audience continues to grow and income from these events has grown by 50% in the past year. These events are entirely secular and allow members of the community who are not of a religious bent to enjoy the wonderful space that we are privileged to inhabit.

Organ Fundraising

Central to music and worship is the Organ, which is now in need of major refurbishment. It is envisaged that commission of refurbishment will take place in the coming year. As this is likely to require considerable expenditure, the Vestry has sanctioned a programme of fundraising, and a calendar of events has been drawn up. The Vestry is also exploring possible grants towards the organ fund. Fundraising efforts to date have already raised approximately £10,000.

Administrative

Efficient administration is key to effective functioning. New office equipment has replaced outdated technology, telephone and internet contracts have been transferred to a new provider. Greater use of electronic communication has minimised printing and paper costs for meetings and events. Vestry members have attended training days on their responsibilities as Charity Trustees and materials to enable them to discharge these are readily available to them.

Youth Group

The children and young people of our congregation are not just the future; they are very much the present. Our young people have been actively involved in the Sunday First services. With the induction of new Youth Leaders into the Youth Group, we look forward to them playing a greater role in the life of the Church.

Eco-Congregation

St. Margaret's continues to support the work of the Eco-Congregation, recognising the importance of making best use of scarce resources. We strongly support the work of the FairTrade Foundation.

Charity Work

St. Margaret's continues to support charitable work. This year, the congregation supported the Bishop's Lent Appeal, with funds raised being donated towards the Mercy Ships Appeal. Additionally, St. Margaret's has supported the Sukhita Child organisation, run by members of our Congregation, which aims to support children

in Sri Lanka disadvantaged as a consequence of the tsunami in 2006. St. Margaret's is proud to support Alzheimer's Scotland who use the Church Hall regularly on weekdays at a concessional rate.

Property

As part of its stewardship of Church property and grounds, the Vestry continues to be vigilant in maintaining the fabric of the Church and Rectory. Work on the roof is ongoing as part of a staged refurbishment which started in the last year. Contracts for maintenance of the grounds, insurance and utilities have been renegotiated with a view to obtaining best value for money. Where possible, the Congregation has participated in maintaining their Church. Rent for letting of the Church Hall and the Curate's Flat is regularly reviewed, the aim being to obtain income that is fair to the tenants but also commensurate with market rates. As far as possible, concessions are made for charitable organisations.

Future

The future holds many challenges, as is right for an organisation blessed with the energy and talents we possess. The most immediate priority is implementation of the Diocesan Growth Strategy, launched by the Bishop earlier this year. This is an opportunity for us to plan proactively for the future and build on our achievements of the past year.

Ajit Panickar

Treasurer's Report

Income	£	£
Offerings including tax recovery	74,942	
Hall donations and property income	21,431	
Investment income	20,773	
Organ Appeal	<u>10,884</u>	
		128,030
Expenditure		
Stipend and salaries	58,406	
Quota	17,835	
Property costs	41,722	
Miscellaneous costs	<u>7,803</u>	
		<u>130,996</u>
Deficit		2,966
		=====

The financial year saw consolidation after a difficult interregnum. The deficit for the year amounted to £2,966, compared with £15,241 in the previous year, largely due to the substantial drop in fabric expenditure. Some of the issues worth noting are:

1. **Income:** Freewill Offering income was down by £2,000 on 2010, as income from leavers has not been replaced. A healthy level of Freewill Offering income is vital to us; we are grateful to those who review their giving on a regular basis, and I would invite everyone to consider the fine church community we have and support it as best they can. The tax reclaim remains a key source of incoming funds, and I would encourage those who do not give under Gift Aid to do so.
2. **Investment income:** As a congregation we are overreliant on this source of income, although it has started to recover. An improvement in the stock market has increased the value of our portfolio by £47,970, but the value of our investments is still £100,000 less than it was 4 years ago.
3. **Property costs:** Apart from the final instalment of a roof repair, fabric maintenance costs were modest. There is, however, no way of knowing when the next bill will arise. Heating and lighting costs £11,000 a year or £200 per week.
4. **Second Sunday concerts:** These have continued to be of a very high standard and are popular both with audience and performers. Generous sponsorship of £1,500 was received and efforts have continued to be made to publicise these concerts. The financial return has been significant but so has the outreach to the wider public which is also exceedingly important.
5. **Organ Appeal:** We are awaiting quotations from organ builders so this has not yet started in earnest. It is clear that major expenditure is likely to be required.
6. **Deficit for year:** The deficit for the year amounts to £2,966, which is encouraging. It is however still a deficit, and the challenge is to continue our efforts to balance the books.
7. **Charitable income disbursements:** In addition to our congregational income, donations of £1,927 were made to various charities.

Maida Gibson

“You’ll never walk alone” – Action on Dementia

Alex Murphy runs the Alzheimer Scotland Group that meets in the church on Thursdays. The Editor caught up with him at the Alzheimers Coffee morning on 5 November and heard about the work he does and how we can help.



Ed: Good morning Alex, and welcome to the coffee morning. What is your role with Alzheimer Scotland?

AM: I am the Glasgow Younger Persons’ Service Manager, based at Oxford Street. Younger Persons means those under 65, and most of our services users are in the 50-65 age range, though we have some as young as their late 20’s.

Ed: Who uses the service and what sort of activities do they do?

AM: Basically, anyone with any form of dementia. Alzheimer’s disease is only one of more than 100 causes of dementia, and I have a special interest in the type of dementia known as Pick’s disease. Whereas Alzheimer’s begins with short term memory loss, which can later affect behaviour, Pick’s disease starts with changes in behaviour which may later cause memory loss.

Our service users for the Thursday group at St Margaret’s come mainly from the South Side, about 6 of them, supported by 2 staff and a volunteer driver (very important because transport is a problem). Typically, they will have a cup of tea and some chat, read the papers, and take part in activities and quizzes, play dominoes and do arts and crafts. As well as St Margaret’s we have 2 days a week at Oxford Street, where amongst other things, people have created an art exhibit on the theme of Glasgow Museums, for display in the People’s Palace in December.

Ed: Is dementia on the increase?

AM: Most definitely; because of the growing percentage of older people in the population, and also because we are better at diagnosing the disease nowadays. Alzheimer Scotland is involved with the Scottish Government’s National Strategy, which has two broad strands. The first is to focus on post diagnostic support, since once diagnosed with dementia, people and their families are often left to fend for themselves. The second is to offer support in hospitals. People with dementia are often seen as a problem, for instance a patient might not be eating his or her food so eventually it is taken away, when with a bit of help and encouragement the patient would eat it. Our Dementia Nurse programme aims to have one Dementia nurse for each Health Board, and we are also looking to establish Dementia Champions who can offer advice and guidance to hospital staff.

Ed: How many people work for Alzheimer Scotland?

AM: Around 750 (not all full time though; some are sessional workers). Approximately 100 work in Glasgow.

Ed: What do you most like about your job?....

AM: I have a good team, and it's great to see positive outcomes after the effort that has been put into managing a situation; this will involve managing, planning ahead and sharing information so that those in a relationship with the person with dementia can cope. It's important to recognize that there is no ultimate cure for Alzheimer's, but our work can make a difference.



Ed:and what do you like the least?

AM: The bureaucracy; demands for paperwork are perhaps necessary but time consuming. We are, however, hopefully moving towards a philosophy of Risk Enablement, where people are encouraged to use their own judgement; this will need trust between staff, families and the various organisations which are involved. We aim to create choice and independence.

Ed: How is Alzheimer Scotland funded?

AM: About 50% comes from local authorities; donations and legacies account for about 25%, and this allows us to develop our support in other ways. Funding social care is going through a period of great change. Self directed support is a way for people to manage their own support; there is a Bill coming before the Scottish Parliament in 2012, which will help us in this.

Ed: What can we at St Margaret's do to help?

AM: We value our links with the Quilters, other fundraisers, and with the community. We impress upon our funders the importance of local communities, so our links with the church are important. We would like to develop these, and wonder if there is a way in which we can make a more creative use of the space. If any of your members would like to consider volunteering, they should contact Susan Rendell, our Volunteer Coordinator. She is also involved in volunteer befriending for people in Nursing Homes and would be delighted to talk to anyone who is interested. I am always available to give advice or talk to groups of people on dementia. Our basic philosophy is that "No one should go through dementia alone".

Ed: Thank you very much for coming along, and we wish you well in your work.



December Calendar of events

- Thu 1st Vestry 7.30pm
- Sun 4th Advent 2
- Tues 6th Holy Communion 10am
Housegroup 7.30pm in the Upper Room
- Wed 7th Rector's Hour at the church 6pm
- Sun 11th Advent 3
Second Sunday concert in the church 3.30pm
Pianist Joseph Fleetwood performs Mozart and Liszt
- Tues 13th Holy Communion 10am
- Wed 14th Rector's Hour at the church 6pm
- Sun 18th Advent 4 - All Age Worship
- Tues 20th Holy Communion 10am
- Wed 21st Rector's Hour at the church 6pm
- Sat 24th Christmas Eve
Family Service 8pm
Midnight Eucharist 11pm
- Sun 25th Christmas Day Family Service (highly informal!) 10.30am

For January events, see church Bulletin, but please note that there will be NO Tuesday communion on 3rd January or Rector's hour on Wednesday 4th January. Second Sunday concert will take place on 8th January.

Rotas for December and January

Readings for December and January

4 Dec	Advent 2	Isaiah 40:1-11; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
11 Dec	Advent 3	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; 1 Thess 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28
18 Dec	Advent 4	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38
25 Dec	Christmas Day	Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:8-20
1 Jan	Naming of Jesus	Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40
8 Jan	Epiphany 1	Genesis 1:1-5; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11
15 Jan	Epiphany 2	1 Samuel 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 John 1: 43-51
22 Jan	Epiphany 3	Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20
29 Jan	Epiphany 4	Deuteronomy 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28

An Odyssey in Israel

George Rawson reflects on a fascinating visit to the Holy Land

This September Ann and I went on a trip through Israel organised by an excellent tour group, Riviera Travel. We flew in to Tel Aviv, a large bustling modern city, much like any other around the Mediterranean, but close to the biblical towns of Lydda and Joppa (known for several centuries as Jaffa). At the hotel we met the rest of the group, some 20 who had flown from Manchester and a similar number from Heathrow together with our tour guide, Norman, an Irishman from Dublin who had lived for many years in Derbyshire, acquiring an interesting hybrid of an accent.

The group were to spend the next eight days touring around Israel and parts of the Palestinian authority in a coach which we joined the next day. Our local guide Dwor (I never learnt to spell his name, but it means 'sparrow' in Hebrew, the background to the name being that you cannot imprison a sparrow in a cage, because a caged sparrow will die) was a highly intelligent man who had thought deeply about the history of his land and its religions. He and Norman together had worked out an interesting route which took us up the coast, across into Galilee, down the Jordan Valley to the southern end of the Dead Sea, and finally into the Judean Hills to Jerusalem, our penultimate destination, before returning to Tel Aviv and home.

Classical sites

The coastline of Israel seems like one continuous city, all the way to Haifa and Mount Carmel. Carmel itself is not a great desolate mountain jutting out into the sea, where one can imagine Elijah calling down fire from heaven, but a steep hill overlooking Haifa, bristling with concrete tower blocks. Between there and Tel Aviv, however, we stopped off at the archaeological site of Caesarea, a classical harbour town built by Herod the Great in honour of Augustus Caesar. It has an over-restored theatre which is still in use, a hippodrome, the remains of Herod's Palace and ramparts built much later by the Crusaders. It was here that Paul was imprisoned before being sent to Rome.



Elijah

Beyond Haifa we stopped at the Crusader city of Acre, where, in only the last twenty years, local archaeologists have unearthed the headquarters of the Knights Hospitalers. Israel is a very small country and by mid afternoon we arrived in Nazareth, an unprepossessing town which sits in a bowl in the hills. There we visited the Basilica of the Annunciation, an impressive modern building, constructed on three levels in the shape of a wigwam. Behind the altar, on the lowest level, is the grotto

where the annunciation is said to have taken place. Only 70 yards away is the more traditional church of St Joseph, where his carpenter's shop is supposed to have been situated. Practically every site related to, or believed to have been associated with, the life of Jesus has its church.

Wine and water

Driving through Kafr Kana, one of the presumed sites of Cana in Galilee, the location of Jesus' first miracle and a town which boasts the 'Cana New Wine Shop' we came to our destination, Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. Tiberias is close to Magdala, Capernaum (a beautiful archaeological site with a 4th century AD synagogue and the house of Peter), the Churches of the Beatitudes, the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, and the 'Primacy of Peter', all of which we visited before embarking on a boat which took us on a cruise over the peaceful blue-green waters of the lake, the main source of water for the whole region, which teems with fish. In the afternoon we journeyed down the barren-seeming but extremely fertile Jordan Valley through the West Bank to the southern end of the Dead Sea, passing Jericho and Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.....



Next day, after the obligatory dip in the water we visited Masada before driving up to Jerusalem. There is a small urn in the Catholicon of the Church of the Resurrection, which marks the centre of the world: beautiful Jerusalem, the excuse for so much conflict, grief and gross injustice, yet so cosmopolitan that you can see more people from different parts of the world in the space of a few minutes than anywhere else. Standing in the queue for the site of Jesus' tomb, we were reminded of the acrimonious history of the site. We found ourselves with a group of Russians, three Palestinians, and a family of Italians all arguing vociferously over who was at the front. Despite this we were deeply impressed by the Christian sites around Jerusalem, particularly the Church of the Resurrection, the Pool of Bethesda and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

We came away, both inspired and full of unanswered questions over the future of this troubled land.

The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried.

GK Chesterton

The Authorized Version 400 years on Reflections on “The Word” - CS Lewis



“It’s always winter but never Christmas”. So says one of the children in CS Lewis’s immortal story “The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe”. As Christmas approaches we conclude our reflections on the AV and its impact by looking at one of the 20th century’s most influential Christian writers.

Clive Staples Lewis was born in 1898 in Ireland, but was always known as Jack. His formal schooling was limited, but he received a scholarship to Oxford in 1916, joined the army in 1917, was wounded in 1918 and discharged in 1919. He became a fellow and tutor in English literature at Oxford in 1925, remaining there until 1954.

Having rejected the faith of his family and become an atheist at the age of 15, he was greatly influenced by JRR Tolkien and the writings of GK Chesterton, and was converted to Christianity in 1931. As a member of “The Inklings” he met with other now famous writers and this group was the stimulus for much of his writing. He married Joy Gresham in 1956, and after she died of cancer in 1960, he continued to care for her sons Douglas and David, until his death in 1963.

His output was prodigious. “Surprised by Joy” tells of his journey to faith, “Mere Christianity” is a robust defence of the faith, “The Screwtape Letters” (from Screwtape, a senior devil to Wormwood, a junior devil about how they as members of the Lowerarchy should treat The Patient) are masterly observations about Christians and their foibles and remind us that the devil is alive and kicking and a force to be reckoned with. For instance Screwtape reminds Wormwood that *“The safest road to Hell is the gradual one - the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without hidden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”*

Perhaps best known are the Chronicles of Narnia, featuring the Pevensie children and their adventures in “The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe”, “The Voyage of the Dawn Treader”, and other books. Like so many “children’s books” they are very relevant to adults, and many Christians have well thumbed Narnia books as reference books for their own lives.

Who cannot fail to love Aslan, the healer, the One who knows Deep Magic, who comes to rescue those in trouble? Terrifying, beautiful, magnificent all at once. *“He’ll be coming and going. One day you’ll see him and another you won’t. He doesn’t like being tied down and of course he has other countries to attend to. It’s*

quite all right. He'll often drop in. Only you mustn't press him. He's wild you know. Not like a tame lion."

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." CS Lewis's story reminds us too of the power and influence which we can have on other people. How much poorer our world would be if CS Lewis had not been welcomed by Christians who guided him to faith and fulfilment. May Christ come to us and through us as we move into 2012.

Jim Gibson

Church garden

As noted in the last magazine the hedge at the back of the church has been reduced to a manageable size but most people will have missed the sight of a skip being filled with a large quantity of brushwood from the hedges while the contract gardeners trimmed some of the holly trees at the front of the church. Ever economical and determined, Jim was to be seen jumping on the contents of the skip to make sure that the church was getting the best value. It entertained many of those waiting for the lights at Newlands Road.



In other parts of the garden leaves have magically found their way into the brown bins and warm thanks are due to everyone who has been helping to keep the gardens free of leaves.

A request was made by a member of the congregation that the Garden of Rest be refurbished. This task has been started with the removal of the ivy from the wall, tidying bushes and trimming of dead heather. There are some pretty plants under the mass of weeds, moss and rampant heather which will be allowed to see the light of day while the shape of the original design is found. It is hoped that the general clearing can be done over the winter so that some planting can be done in the spring.

If anyone has photographs of the garden when it was first laid out these would be hugely helpful.

I am very grateful to the people who are helping in the garden and who have promised help; if anyone else would like to help with our beautiful grounds then please let me know so that we can keep them looking fresh and trim.

Maida Gibson

Elephants ahoy!...

Jan Whiteside is coming to terms with her new surroundings in Sri Lanka....

The lifestyle here is very seductive! You need to do nothing; our wonderful Raja cleans the house, the pool and now the car every day!! Silva does most of the food shopping and cooks wonderful Sri Lankan food for us. A young man packs the shopping at the supermarket and another carries it to the car. Putting petrol in the car is a dream, you don't need to get out of the car because another young man comes to the window and you give him some money and he puts petrol in the tank.

I now have the independence that I lacked for the last three months, as we have bought a car! Let me describe the 'joy' of driving in Sri Lanka and in Colombo in particular.

We drive here on the same side as we do at home. Great... until you are driving along in the inside lane minding your own business and you see a three wheeler, in your lane, heading directly for you! There is no lane discipline whatever. The white lines are for decorative purposes only. The zebra crossings are only for pedestrians of a suicidal disposition. The traffic doesn't stop and I have seen people grow old waiting to cross the road. Jay walking is alive and flourishing in Sri Lanka. Driving at night is particularly exciting as the street lights are almost non-existent and when the sun goes down it is very, very dark here. No dusk and of course everyone seems to wear dark clothes!

Some car accessories are particularly important here, especially car horns. If you don't move off slightly before the lights change there will be a cacophony of horns reminding you to move. Horns here tell you 'I'm hurtling towards you on your side of the road and perhaps it would be a good idea to get out of my way!' Or 'move over I'm coming up on your inside', or in the case of buses 'get out of my way because I ain't going to stop'. Indicators are noticeable by their absence, motorists preferring to rely on the psychic abilities of other road users!

There is only one rule of the road and that is..... big is better! The hierarchy goes something like this:



1 . Cows / Elephants. Cows wander everywhere. If there is a cow in the middle of the road the traffic stops and waits patiently, sort of, for the beast to move. Last week it was a herd! Around twenty cows strolling down main street Bataramulla. Another time it was a very large elephant happily wandering along the road with his mahout on a chain. It was one of these 'I guess I'm not in Kansas anymore Toto' moments.

2. Buses. They are big and noisy and full of people and driven by drivers who are very clear about where they sit in the hierarchy.

3. 4x4. I now know why there are so many on the roads. Firstly you get to be pretty high up on the pecking order after the cows, elephants and buses and secondly the roads are in such awful condition it feels as if you are driving 'off road' most of the time.

4. Normal cars. What can I say, the standard of driving is manic.

5. Three wheelers. These are usually known as Tuk Tuks, because of the sound they make as they hurtle in and out of the traffic like so many scurrying ants, fast and terrifying. The drivers don't get worried about lanes or the direction of traffic and just head off at what seem to be terrifying speeds.



6. Motor bikes. Like three wheelers they seem to be subject to neither rules nor lane discipline. It is not unusual to see whole families on one bike. Mum and Dad wear crash helmets and the two or three children sitting in between them have woolly hats!! How useful the woolly hat would be in a crash, God only knows.

7. Pedestrians. The poor pedestrian is at the very, very bottom of the heap. It is suicidal to try to cross at zebra crossings, and there are so few pavements in the suburbs, so the choice is to risk falling into the monsoon drain, hoping the water isn't too deep and there are no snakes lurking.....or risk being squashed like a mosquito by one of the manic bus drivers to whom life is very cheap, particularly yours!

Having said all of that, we are getting used to the hazards of driving here. Tom told me the other day that I was driving like a Sri Lankan. I'm not sure if that is a compliment or not! The locals are certainly bemused at expats who drive themselves, particularly a woman.

Friends also find it odd that we don't have a driver. Recently, Tom and I were going to a big hotel for lunch with friends to celebrate a birthday, and when Tom asked the security guard where we might park, he was told to drop 'Madam' off at the front door and then park the car in the underground car park!! He will never be allowed to live that down!!

So that's the news from the Indian Ocean. Off to the Maldives next weekend! It's tough but someone has to do it. Love to you all. *Jan*

Editor in the hot seat...

Jan MacDonald recently interviewed the Editor to find out how he had enjoyed his first year at the desk.



Jim's first edition was November 2010. I asked him what had been the most daunting aspect, having agreed to take on editorship of the church magazine. "Learning to use Publisher!" (the computer programme used to create the magazine). "Quite an interesting experience and a rapid 3 week learning curve, not without some help from Scott, and I've been learning ever since!"



What did Jim hope to bring to the editorship? "I put a trailer into the October 2010 magazine with the strap-line *Look Out*. Look Out – for others, being alert for their needs, informing, encouraging and helping. Look Out – for problems and obstacles, see what's coming, seek to offer a Christian perspective on the world around us. Look Out – be outward looking, find out what's going on in our congregation, our community, our diocese, encourage the mission of the church.

So *Look Out* was my strap-line and it still is."

I then asked Jim about how the magazine is compiled – he is very organised, methodical and disciplined; working to both a liturgical and congregational calendar. He has largely kept to the inherited magazine format with its regular items such as the Pastoral letter, reports from church organisations, rotas, but also woven in themes (like 400 years of the Authorised Version) added in quizzes, sudoku and "The Last Word" - a page he gleefully tells me that Doris Schmidt-Leukel in Germany always turns to *first!* Jim has an amazing memory for quotes and clips from a wide variety of sources and spices any conversation with at least one or two. It is this love of words, the written word especially which attracted Jim to the job of editor.

However Jim does not see himself as the sole writer "I can't do it all myself, I saw myself as an enabler, collator. I've taken great pleasure in finding people to contribute and I'm not afraid to *nobble* someone for an article in the next edition which is always in my mind." I get the feeling that Jim has quite powerful means of persuasion when it comes to encouraging us to put pen to paper – look out indeed! But that's a huge strength and shows how passionate Jim is about representing the great diversity of our congregation. He says his style is permissive in that he'll "Publish whatever people produce, with some editorial

discretion. I want it to be of a high standard and to read well. I'm looking to provide a bit of substance; solid food, not baby milk. I'm very grateful for the free hand that Scott allows me." But, Jim admits, there is a considerable commitment in time required to gather, sort and arrange all the items for each edition and the 4 week cycle comes round all too quickly. (Hence his mind is always on the next one). Production of the magazine is a team effort – Jim "puts his feet up" after e-mailing copies of the magazine to June who prints it off and to Ajit who puts it on the web site (I wonder how many folk around the world view it there?). Connie, who is about to hand over to Prue, then organises collating rota so that within the week each edition is ready for posting or collecting.

Jim's enthusiasm for the potential of the magazine is clear. When asked "What's the most enjoyable part of the job," he candidly says "Just seeing the variety of talents we've got at St Margaret's, being able to get contributions from over 50 people has shown me just what a wide range of interests and characters we have. I would like to think that encouraging people to contribute something has helped and encouraged them to play their part, however small, in binding the fellowship of our church together." Another pleasure is designing the front cover, making it striking and relevant – now in colour of course.



So what of the future? Jim says, "More of the same. I'm still seeking to develop the *Look Out* philosophy – it's a powerful image and I'm thinking of some themes. One thing I would like is feedback about what people like and dislike."

Looking back over the year Jim did think that editorship of the magazine had changed him too. "It has made me more appreciative of the wealth of talent we've got at St Margaret's and as a relatively new kid-on-the-block that has been very helpful in getting to know people. I want to encourage an appropriate breadth of content while at the same time remaining true to what I regard as fundamentals of faith. I want to have a magazine which challenges people and helps them develop in their spiritual life, and I'm always thinking about what's appropriate for that aim. I am a little anxious as to whether or not it's too much of a one-man-band, but then I reflect that I've got a *team* already; those who provide the articles."

Now that's what I'd call an outward looking self- appraisal. Thanks Jim for all your enthusiasm and hard work.

The “Big 5”

Tony Pexton, a relative newcomer to St Margaret’s, volunteers his answers to our questions.

Who is your hero / heroine and why?

I have always greatly admired modest, quietly spoken, dignified people capable of contributing creatively beyond the bounds of existing knowledge and achievement. Of the few I have been privileged to meet, probably the first was Professor Hawthorne who died very recently. He was my tutor in the mid 1950’s during my final year as an undergraduate. Then about 40 years old, he had already made significant contributions in a wide range of fields as diverse, for example, as the first jet engine and snow fences. He generated in me a great interest in fluid mechanics which I was fortunate to be able to pursue for a decade or so but, despite his encouragement, I recognised after a year of intermittent contact with him, that I was not destined to dwell in the highest echelons of academia! Among his many honours he later became Master of Churchill College Cambridge.

What is your favourite piece of music: favourite painting: favourite poem?

I have no musical ability or real knowledge, nor a good musical ear, but that does not stop me from enjoying music from folk to classics. My wife’s stepbrother has been the lead of the Oldham Tinkers for 40 years and we enjoy his recordings from time to time for a bit of nostalgia. On classics I would probably opt for Mozart, obviously because of his brilliant composition, but also, I would have to admit, because his music always takes me back to good holidays Jo and I have enjoyed in Austria. My most played, however, is an old and now damaged recording of Mahler’s 4th by the then SNO conducted by Sir Alexander Gibson.



Painting. I have admired great works in many galleries but wouldn’t pretend to understand the art market – particularly some modern art. I will settle for something simple that I see daily, a print of Plockton, a painting of the Lake District and one or two by family and friends.

Poem. I learnt Keats’ “Ode to Autumn” at school. It is ageless and topical at this time of year but perhaps I choose it to keep up the unjustifiable pretence that I am still in the Autumn of my life!

What is your favourite book / film?

Two books, one I read as a boy and the second after I retired.

Jo and I have always enjoyed roaming the hills. Our achievements have been very modest but it has made me an admirer of the great mountaineers and in my youth an

enthusiastic reader of their books. The one that has stayed with me most is “Seven Years in Tibet” by Heinrich Harrer, a member of the first team to climb the North Wall of the Eiger. As well as the mountain content, his description of Tibetan Life brings into focus the rich diversity of cultures in the world of the mid 20th century.

The second book is Jane Eyre, not for the famous love story but for Charlotte Bronte’s beautiful composition of descriptive but uncomplicated language.

Films – the well acted low budget variety. I thought “Billy Elliott” and “The King’s Speech” were outstanding examples.

What is your favourite significant memory of St Margaret’s?

As a new boy to St Margaret’s I was more than surprised to be asked to take part in this. There are many aspects of life at St Margaret’s which Jo and I have come to appreciate, but it is sometimes the small things which are highlights in our individual lives. I have been very touched and grateful for the kind and spontaneous messages of goodwill sent by church members to Jo during her recent illness.

Who would you like to be locked inside St Margaret’s with (can be fact or fantasy)?

I think I would bring back John Maynard Keynes and Milton Friedman, from two different schools of economics and ask them, now that they have spent some time weighing things up from above (or wherever), to consider why the world has got itself into such a financial mess, and then see if they could reach any agreement on how the UK in particular should progress from here! I fear I would go home out of my depth, but sadly remembering the old adage “two economists, three solutions”, to a wife who would say “I told you so” and hopefully offer me a large whisky.

Advent Calendar

A poem to focus our thoughts, by Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

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

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

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

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

Intercessions

Father God, we commit into your care all who have been victims of road traffic accidents, and those who have lost loved ones in accidents. We pray for the emergency services, and all those who are responsible for safety on the roads, that they might be able to do all they can to keep our roads safe.



Father God, the cry for justice from the prophets comes through the centuries to us today. We pray for all who are in positions of power and influence – for governments, for financial institutions and business leaders.

We pray for campaigners and protesters, calling out for change. We ask that they would listen to one another, hear one another’s concerns, and act to bring about your justice. We pray also for those who have no power and no voice – those oppressed and victimised by our economic systems. You hear their cry, Lord, may we hear it also, and respond to it.

Father God, we pray for the leaders of our church here at St Margaret's. We thank you for the work of the Vestry, and all who have served in this way, and we commit to you those who are offering themselves for election to the Vestry at the coming AGM.

Father God, all of us are waiting for things, some small, some big. As we wait, may we wait on You, be alert for Your call, that we would receive all You have in store for us.

In Jesus name we pray, Amen

Maggie McTernan (6 November)

Puzzle Corner Christmas Sudoku

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box contains the letters

A N G E L H O S T

		N	L	A	O			T
	T						L	H
G			E			N		
H		G		T			N	L
			H		A		G	
E	A			G				O
		H			L	E		S
N	E			O			H	
		S	G	E	H		A	

The Last Word

Young Sally had recently joined the church junior choir and came home one afternoon after practice to say that they had been learning the hymn “Lord of the Dance”, but that she couldn’t understand why Jesus kept jumping up and down on sofas.

Her mother thought about it for a moment before she realised that Sally had heard the line “I am the Lord of the dance, said he” as “I am the Lord of the dance settee”!

St Margaret of Scotland, Newlands



Service details

Sundays

9.00am Said Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist,

Crèche, Sunday School & Youth Group

Tuesdays

10am Holy Communion

For other services not listed please see Diary inside

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