



GLASGOW & GALLOWAY

Diocesan News

ISSUE 108: OCTOBER 2011

A Post Office for Christmas – thanks to the local churches

PISKIES and Kirk members in Bridge of Weir have combined forces to start the creation of a community centre and give the village a Post Office again. In the face of a seemingly impossible time-frame, the visionary plan has won huge support from local folk. More than 100 people have volunteered to do unpaid work. And an ambitious appeal for funding has seen generous local donors exceed the target by more than 33%.

TRISH TELFER takes up the story...

It started as a Christian initiative to do something about a community centre and the loss of Bridge of Weir's Post Office. Originally this was an informal meeting of members of Freeland and St Machar's Ranfurly Churches. Now St Mary's Episcopal Church is also playing an important role in making the idea a reality.

Local councillors pressed Renfrewshire Council to delay the proposed sale of the library building and give the local community a chance to put together a viable business plan for its future.

This plan is to run the old library as a community centre, which will be known as 'The Bridge', with a 'Post Office Essential' which will be run by staff trained by the Post Office but recruited by The Bridge.

We only had two weeks to convince everyone that it was within our grasp to open up a new Post Office.

Letters appealing for funds went out to every house in Bridge of Weir and the response – in just over a fortnight – was a magnificent £20,471.

The Bridge's steering group worked diligently to meet the council's tight deadline and application forms and business plans were submitted in time for September's meeting.

Once we get the keys to the old library we will be able to convert one area to Post Office specifications for a Post Office Essential counter and then renovate the remainder of the building to reflect the many suggestions which have been made as to how it can be used as a community centre.

The plans for this are at present a matter for much discussion.

Final agreement has not yet been reached with the Council but, as its representatives have been very en-

couraging, our planning group are forging ahead. The work undertaken so far has been enormous, as has collating the relevant applications to both Renfrewshire Council and the Post Office in time for tight deadlines.

In due course, The Bridge will become a limited company with charity status which will be run by an elected committee. Preparation is already under way to submit grant applications for community projects. If you have been watching Village SOS you will have seen how these grants can make such a difference to community projects.

The Bridge will be right in the middle of the village. Everyone can pop in, relax and have a tea or coffee

“We only had two weeks to convince everyone it was within our grasp”

served from a small kitchen manned by volunteers. Suggestions are coming in – can we have a book exchange, and a DVD exchange? The layout will reflect the needs of guest organisations or charities, such as the Credit Union and CAB, and also for activities for youngsters, the elderly, mothers and babies – and those who just fancy a break and a browse.

Very soon the building, once known for whispered conversations and calm, will be bustling with activity as work gets under way.

The £20,000 is an excellent start and much more will be needed but the present priority is to get the Post Office open and functioning in time for Christmas!

To keep up with progress, visit The Bridge at www.bridgeofweir.org.

Trish Telfer is a kirk elder in St Machar's Ranfurly, and has been the committee member in charge of publicity

Also in this issue . . .

Going for growth—the latest steps

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Pilgrim trail hits the airwaves

Discover the Enneagram

Advent quiet day

Conferences and courses

Harvest reminds us of the means of God's grace

AT this autumn time of year we love to celebrate the harvest festival. The churches are beautifully decorated, the produce nicely arranged on the steps and window sills and the fragrant smell of fruit and vegetables fills the air.

In our age of supermarkets and fast food retailers, far removed from the tilled land and animal husbandry, our harvest feasts help us to acknowledge not only our human need and enjoyment for food, but also the spiritual quality and gift of food itself.

Our physical bodily nourishment and our appreciation of food are deepened by an awareness of the goodness of creation which gives us a sense of well-being. The qualities of careful preparation and sharing of food challenge the destructive elements of greed and waste; valuing food as the product of others' labour and livelihood questions attitudes of exploitation and over-production. In the meeting of our daily needs a sense of gratitude and dependency on God guards against attitudes of our own self-sufficiency and an independence that relies on our own resources – as if they could satisfy our deepest needs and longings.

Wendell Berry, an American farmer who has campaigned against the over-industrialisation of food production says:

“To live we must daily break the body and shed the blood of creation. When we do this knowingly, lovingly, skilfully and reverently, it is a sacrament. When we do it ignorantly, greedily, destructively it is a desecration. In such a desecration we condemn ourselves to spiritual moral loneliness and others to want.”

(The Gift of Good Land. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint 2009).

Harvest time reminds us that the food that sustains us all is the bounty of our abundant and fruitful earth. The blessings of food which relieve our hunger and satisfy our basic human needs enable us to live well because they are also the means and vehicle of God's grace which fill us with gratitude and joy.

Maureen Russell, member, Diocesan Action Group for Spirituality; Third-Order Franciscan; Pastoral Assistant at St Mary's Bridge of Weir and St Fillan's Kilmacolm.

Volunteering in Faith?

DO you volunteer in or outwith a church setting? Are you interested in exploring this issue in relation to the 'Big Society'?

Volunteering in Faith: Obligation or Joy? is a day conference with talks and workshops organised by the Church in Society committee of the Scottish Episcopal Church. It takes place on **Saturday 19 November**, St Mary's Centre, Kinnoull, Perth, 9.30am-4pm.

Keynote speaker Ann Morisey is a freelance community theologian and lecturer. She directed the Commission that published the report *Faithful Cities. Journeying Out*.

Register by 15 October by sending name, address and e-mail to the Church Relations Officer, 21 Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5EE with a £5 cheque payable to the Scottish Episcopal Church.

ADVENT QUIET DAY

Saturday 10 December, 10am-4pm

This is a day of prayer and reflection on an Advent theme. There is a choice of two venues.

It will be led by Bishop Gregor Duncan at Holy Trinity & St Barnabas, Paisley, and by Bishop Gordon Mursell at St Ninian's, Castle Douglas.

Participants are asked to bring their own lunch; tea/coffee will be provided.

To book your place contact Jennifer FitzGibbon (secretary, Action Group for Spirituality), 01294 823992, e-mail j2fq@aol.com, or write to the Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH (mark envelope 'Advent Quiet Day').

Growth Strategy—steady progress over the summer

YOU may have been thinking that nothing much has happened on the Growth Strategy front since the Pentecost launches. In fact, this is far from the case.

While there has deliberately been no attempt to begin Mission Action Planning (MAP-ing) in the charges over the summer, that being a known as a fallow period congregational-wise, much has been happening at diocesan level.

All clergy with charge were invited to meet with the Dean and myself to think through the process of being assigned a MAP facilitator and to become acquainted with the MAP process. There was a superb

response to this invitation and the three meetings, held in Dumfries, Kilmarnock and central Glasgow, were well attended and achieved much.

A further meeting was held on Monday 12 September to which the convenors of action networks and a representative from every group were invited. The meeting began the process of aligning these groups – which are effectively 'development teams' with the necessary skills and resources to further the mission of the diocese – with the aims of the Growth Strategy, and reviewing their remits and working practices.

A third level of implementation will take place on Thursday 13 October when Regional Council convenors and secretaries will gather in the diocesan office to consider their remit in the light of the Growth Strategy.

And, of course, as vestries begin to meet again after the summer break some are even now beginning to contact the Dean requesting that they be assigned Facilitators so that the MAP-ing might commence.

So yes, things are indeed happening.

*Revd Dr Ann Tomlinson,
ministry development officer*

One bike, one priest, one thousand miles

REVD Russell Jones, who is chaplain at the Marie Curie Hospice in Glasgow, has returned after cycling nearly 1,000 miles from Land's End to John o Groats.

He had just 10 days to complete the distance along with a group of about 20, all raising cash for Marie Curie Cancer Care.

Up till a month before the start, he hadn't ridden more than 70 miles in a single day! DNS asked Russell how it went...

What was the most punishing thing about the whole 1,000-mile ride?

First, getting out of bed each morning, knowing that there was a long day's ride ahead.

Second, I was prepared for the long distances, but I wasn't prepared for the amount of uphill cycling that we did. One person reckoned that the first day in Cornwall included a total of about 3,000 metres of

climbing. Over the 10 days we did just over 17,000 metres of climbing.

Did you ever stop believing you would go the distance?

Days one and three were the most difficult for me, but my son, an expert cyclist, made sure that I had a bike that could do the job and that it fitted me like a glove. This comfort and response from the bike on the road put any doubts out of my head.

What kept you going?

As a group we encouraged each other, each respecting what we were all trying to achieve. For me, the first line of Psalm 121 has been an inspiration over many years:

I lift up my eyes to the hills - where does my help come from?

One Morning Prayer reading that week was from Song of Songs, and it included the verse: *I have washed my feet - must I soil them again?* (5.3). That suited my early-morning mood that day.

What memories will continue to inspire you?

There are many, but I delight in the grace by which complete strangers come together, can co-operate, can be honest with each other, help each other and have fun. One of my favourite memories was cycling and climbing the roads around Helmsdale.

How can folk make a donation?

Sponsorship money is still coming in and the total so far has reached about £1,300.

I'd appreciate the kindness of any more donors, and I'll send a sponsorship form to Bishop Gregor so that there'll be one in the diocesan office for a few weeks, or donations can be made on my Justgiving page: <http://www.justgiving.com/Russell-Jones1>

What will be your next epic challenge?

I'll soon be starting a quest to find the source of the *People's Friend* so that I can subscribe to the magazine, reach for my slippers and rest my weary bones.

HARVEST MARKET WITH SWEDES!

ST Ninian's Troon welcome their Swedish Partners from the Dalstorp Pastorate to share in their harvest thanksgiving celebrations on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 October.

There will be a short act of worship at 7.30pm in the church on the Saturday evening followed by harvest supper in the hall (tickets £5).

On Sunday the traditional harvest thanksgiving Service at 10.30am will be followed by a harvest-market in the hall with members of the congregation bringing home-grown produce and home-made jams, marmalade and chutney to sell in aid of Mary's Meals.

Bishop Per consecrated in Gothenburg

BISHOP elect Per Eckerdal was consecrated as Bishop of the diocese of Gothenburg in the Cathedral of Uppsala on 4 September with the assistance of Bishop Gregor Duncan, among others.

The following Saturday he was received in a service in the Cathedral of the diocese. The motto of Bishop Per is 'among you', from John 1.26.

Bishop Per explains the motto as 'in the midst of life, in the midst of society, in the midst of creation, Jesus Christ is already present'.

The motto also is linked to Jesus' promise in Matthew 18.20: 'For wherever two or three people come together in my name, I am there, right among you!'. Christ is present in the crowd and has, at the same time and in a particular way, tied the promise of his presence to the closeness and intensity that exists at a Christian gathering.

Peter Andersson, Diocese of Gothenburg

News and events in brief . . .

BISHOP Gregor is acting Bishop of Edinburgh during the vacancy there. The Rt Revd Brian Smith retired from the office of Bishop of Edinburgh on 15 August. Bishop Brian was installed in June 2001 following the retirement of Richard Holloway.

REV D Cedric Blakey is to represent the Diocese on the *More than Gold* steering committee, an initiative to plan an interdenominational response to the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

HOMELESSNESS: Achieving the 2012 Pledge? That's the theme of a conference on Friday 30 September, 10am-3.30pm, at Edinburgh City Chambers.

Scottish Churches Housing Action with the Church & Society Council of the Church of Scotland will be bringing housing professionals and activists together to assess progress towards the Scottish Government's target of an entitlement to a home for almost all homeless people by 2012. Contact info@churches-housing.org.

THE Glasgow Passion is a new and modern interpretation of the story of Jesus from Cutting Edge Theatre Productions with a community cast.

Producer Suzanne Lofthus has directed passion plays for over 10 years. She has extensive experience of large

scale community productions in Scotland as well as abroad. See it on Thursday 6 October, 7.30 pm, George Square, Glasgow.

More details and booking information at www.glasgowpassion.co.uk/. Volunteer stewards may still be needed.

GLASGOW Churches Together annual general meeting takes place Monday 24 October, 6.45 for 7.15 pm at The Ogilvie Centre, 25 Rose Street, Glasgow G3 6RE.

The guest speaker is Revd Deacon Kenny McGeachie of Faith in Throughcare.

ON Your Marks is a sports ministry training weekend, 25-27 November, at Carronvale House, Larget.

Participants are offered the chance to gain new coaching skills and qualifications; learn from others working in sports ministry; explore how to use sport in their church, organisation or community; and meet others with a passion for sport and faith.

Speakers include: Barry Nicholson, sports lecturer, City of Glasgow College; Alan Gray, Youth For Christ; Chris Plews, Glasgow Churches Commonwealth Games co-ordinator; Barry Mason, Youth For Christ.

Cost: £60-70 including accommodation and meals. Contact alan.gray@yfc.co.uk, 07748 675656.

DIOCESAN ministry development officer Revd Dr Anne Tomlinson has agreed to continue in her post for another three years.

CLIMATE Justice Now offers an evening looking at climate

change, debt and Scotland's role in global justice.

Lidy Nacpil, co-ordinator of Jubilee South, from the Philippines will speak about debt, the impacts of climate change in her country, her experience of the UN climate talks and how we can help bring about climate justice.

It's on Thursday 6 October, 7.30-9.30pm, Renfield St Stephens, 260 Bath St, Glasgow G2 4JP. All welcome; no need to book.

CHURCH Action on Poverty invites you to the Scottish launch of the Close the Gap campaign, in Glasgow on Saturday 1 October, 3.30-4.30pm, Anderson Parish Church, 759a Argyle Street, Glasgow G3 8DS. Attendance is free. Register at www.eventbrite.com/event/2156785002.

HOLY City's monthly evening sessions of worship, discussion and more start again on Sunday 30 October, 6.30pm, Renfield St Stephen's, Bath Street, Glasgow.

Holy City is an ecumenical event facilitated by the Iona Community's Wild Goose Worship Group with others. Visit www.holycity-glasgow.co.uk.

DEBT'S Not Done is the topic of Jubilee Scotland's Alys Mumford when she speaks in Ayr on Friday 28 October (during One World Week).

She says: "This is a chance to find out about the role you can play in solving the problems of debt justice and bring hope to the millions of people suffering as a result of unfair global finance. We'll be looking at Jubilee Scotland's current campaigns,

PILGRIM TRAIL HITS THE AIRWAVES

RADIO Scotland's Past Lives history show has just recorded a programme on the proposed revival of part of a pilgrimage trail from Glasgow to Whithorn.

The show will be aired on Monday 26 September at 2.05pm and repeated just after midnight the following Sunday (strictly speaking: Monday morning, 3 October).

The trail also features on BBC Scotland's *Landward* TV series later this season. Its team recently spent two days filming in Carrick, South Ayrshire, where ancient pilgrimage resting points are still in evidence.

Christmas hosts wanted for overseas students

ARE you staying at home for Christmas or New Year? Would you open your home and share your festivities with a student from China, India or some other part of the world, who would otherwise be alone at an almost deserted university, far from their own family?

These adult students are guests in our country who would love to experience your way of life for a few days, and are prepared to travel some distance for this privilege.

HOST is a voluntary organisation with a network of UK residents who welcome adult international students to their homes for a weekend or Christmas visit. Volunteer hosts are urgently needed for 3-4 days at Christmas or New Year. Visit www.hostuk.org or call voluntary local organiser Anne-Marie Ringler on 01698 386100.

News and events in brief (continued)

and exploring global debt in more depth using film, discussion and debate.”

The meeting is at the Citadel Leisure Centre, South Harbour Street, Ayr, at 7.30pm. Admission free.

REV D Paul Romano was instituted as Rector of St Ninian's Pollokshields on Sunday 17 September.

THE Fidelio Trio perform at Ayr's Holy Trinity Church at 7.30pm on Saturday 15 October.

A WORSHIP workshop led by Graham Maule and Iona Community's Wild Goose Worship Group members takes place 6pm, Sunday 9 October in Ayr.

This inter-church workshop will look at creative and contemporary ways of doing 'alternative' worship. It's hosted by Holy Trinity Church (Fullarton Street, next to the bus station). All welcome.

RUSSIAN choir Voskersenije perform three concerts in Ayrshire this month.

Venues are St Oswald's Maybole (Wed 26th), Holy Trinity Ayr (Thursday 27th) and St John's, Dalrymple Street, Girvan (Friday 28th).

ST Mary's congregation, with the help of the Brunch & Browse team from St Fillan's, will hold a Saturday Fare in Bridge of Weir on Saturday 22 October. It will be in the Royal British Legion Hall (near the

Co-op and the car park). Bottomless cups of coffee/tea with warm sausage rolls and cakes/biscuits will be served from 10.30am to 12noon.

And there will be home-made soup, buttered rolls and cakes/biscuits followed by coffee/tea available from noon to 2pm.

There will be the usual stalls: cakes and preserves, gift stall, books, CDs & DVDs, and tombola.

Enjoy a coffee or lunch break (or both for an extra donation) for £3 (accompanied under-11s free).

RICHARD Evans was licensed as a Lay Reader last month at Christ Church Lanark, his home congregation, in a service at which the Bishop presided and Richard himself preached.

All welcome at the latest *Church and the Academy* seminars

THE *Church and the Academy* programme is under way again, and all are welcome.

Meetings take place in the Seminar Room, Department of Theology No. 4, The Square, Glasgow University, on Thursdays from 5.30pm to 7pm.

Attendance varies between 10 and 20 participants drawn from the diocese – both lay and clerical members – and from university staff and students.

Seminar papers or discussion starters are welcomed from any of the participants, and the programme balances the offerings of both constituencies.

Diocesan ministry development officer Anne Tomlinson comments:

“It's a good way to refresh one's theological faculties and enjoy the company of friends from diocese and university alike.

“The series offers an opportunity to engage in theo-

logical discussion in a relaxed and congenial setting and, for those who wish an outlet for their ongoing thinking or writing, a chance to prepare a short paper for wider consideration.”

The seminar is accompanied by refreshments and afterwards many participants continue the discussions over a meal in a nearby eating house.

This term's programme, arranged by Revd Dr Scott Robertson, has the following subjects and speakers.

- ♦ Revd Canon Dr Mike Fuller (Pantonian Professor & TISEC coordinator) on Theology and Science, 29 September;
- ♦ Revd Dr AKMA Adam (lecturer, New Testament Studies), on a topic to be announced, 27 October;
- ♦ Michael Bawtree (lecturer, RSMAD, and director of music, St Margaret's Newlands) on Sacred Music, 24 November.

Next issue . . .

ITEMS for the November issue may be submitted by **Monday 17 October** as ordinary prose (**not** leaflets, adverts, posters or PDFs, please) to editor Susi Cormack Brown, c/o Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH, or dns@episcopalglasgow.co.uk.

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ACTION GROUP FOR SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION TO

THE ENNEAGRAM

THE Enneagram can be used to help us recognise and acknowledge our areas of giftedness and limitation. By enabling us to appreciate more fully the ways we differ as individuals, it can also help us find ways of relating to one another with greater understanding and compassion.

A day introducing the Enneagram will be led by Ali Newell of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre on **SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER**, 11am-4pm, at Holy Trinity Church, Fullarton Street, Ayr KA7 1UB.

Participants are asked to bring their own packed lunch. Tea, coffee, fruit juice and biscuits will be provided. Donations to help cover costs will be welcome on the day.

At least 10 participants are needed, so if you would like to go, contact Caroline McKillop as soon as possible.

Call 0141 339 7000 or e-mail carolinemckillop@yahoo.co.uk.