



March 2010

There was a day when 99.9% of people in the UK would have been laid to rest with the trappings of a Christian service, conducted by a minister (or priest). Before that, a large number of them would have been baptised in a Christian ceremony and married in one too!

Clearly things have changed. Now, only a small proportion of children born in the UK are being baptised and a hugely smaller proportion of couples are being married in Christian ceremonies (if they are getting married at all) than was once the case. But though we have become used to *these* changes, we are now beginning to see an increasing number of people opting for non-religious funeral services. Many of you will have attended a funeral service conducted by a humanist or civil celebrant.

Some within the Christian Church will see this as cause for further weeping and gnashing of teeth – yet more evidence of the retreat of Christianity. And, to be sure – it is that!

But let's think positively. Previously, many of those who opted for religious ceremonies – whether in terms of hatches, matches or dispatches – were doing so because there was no obvious choice and not because of any particular Christian convictions held. There really was very little honesty and integrity about such a way of doing things. Now, given that there is a clear choice, people can make decisions that are right for them. There is no need, any more, for the hypocrisy of a religious service where no religious persuasion exists.

And beyond that, there are two other observations that

## A Civil Ceremony, Please!

might be made.

Firstly, while it is clear that the institution of the Christian Church in the UK is

decaying, who's to say that that's not a good thing! Sometimes, we need to experience autumn and winter before there can be spring. Sometimes, we need to let go of that which was cherished – but is no longer working – before we can be ready to receive the new thing that God is doing.

The problem with institutional religion is that it allows people to avoid having to properly respond to the claims of the Gospel. With a religious service here and there, people can satisfy themselves with the very thinnest of veneers – when all the while Jesus is demanding *my everything!*

And that leads to the second point; there's never been a better time for the Church to be truly evangelical. Now that there is a clear choice – now that people can decide whether or not they want religious services etc. etc. – the Church has a better-than-ever-before opportunity to openly and honestly present the truths of the Christian faith. Clearly, we can no longer take it for granted that the man along the street and the woman next door are Christian believers; it's not been that way for a long while! It's for the Church, then – and that means all of us! – to live out our faith and speak of our faith in such a way as to help people decide where they really stand.

Some of us are convinced in our faith. Others are convinced that it's all rubbish! But that leaves a whole lot of people who aren't sure. And there's the challenge to the Church.

Let's not miss it.



On Sunday 14th February, Martin made full use of the flexibility that we now have in our Sanctuary. The Easter cross was placed at the heart, and in the hearts, of the congregation as we approach that important time of year...

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**ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH  
REGISTER OF MEMBERS****February 2010****Baptisms** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - Ian Gilchrist, Bill Adam

(NB. We should remember always that we are a parish church. So, while only the names of members are listed here, between them Martin and Ruth have conducted twenty funerals since the beginning of the year! This is just one of the ways in which the church seeks to serve the people of the wider community.)

**DEADLINE DATES FOR DIARIES****APRIL EDITION**

Please note that **DEADLINE** dates must mean exactly that. Information that needs to be **Word Processed** should be handed in to the **office** by the **first** date and **not** to the Editor.

Friday 19th March (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 23rd March (Word-Processed file)

**Annual Stated Meeting**

As required of us, we will hold our Annual Stated Meeting at the close of worship on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2010. At that meeting, Derek, our treasurer, will present the 2009 accounts of the congregation. These have been scrutinised by our Finance and Administration Core Group and will be duly audited. At the meeting, there will be opportunity for members of the congregation to ask questions on these accounts (understanding that a line-by-line analysis has already been done) and on a range of other matters. Where at all practical, members are asked to arrange their diaries in such a way as to allow attendance at this important meeting.

**Organisations will alert members when changes to venues are made.****SUNDAY**

10.15 am – Gathering for prayer.

10.30 am – Choir practice.

11.00 am – Morning service (with short communion on the third Sunday of each month. Tea/coffee after. Creche – up to age 3. Infants – ages 3 to 5. Juniors – ages 8 and 9. Seniors – ages 10 and 11. Sunday Club – Elaine Fair (873238). Teen Scene – S1 to S2

6.30 to 8.00 pm – Sunday evening ICE-BREAKERS – up to age 16

8.00 pm – Sunday evening Youth Group – age 16 plus

**MONDAY**

11.00 am – Havilah – Drop-in Centre – Church Office (431135)

2.00 pm – Dorothy Dobson Over 50s Exercise Class

6.00 pm – Rainbow Guides – L Hadden (875379)

7.30 pm – St Andrew's Guild : Fortnightly – Joyce Lownie (430053)

7.30 pm – Flower Club : Fortnightly – M McIntosh (876993)

**WEDNESDAY**

10.30 am – Midweek Meeting Point – M Fair (873238)

11.00 am – Havilah – Drop-in Centre – Church Office (431135)

5.45 pm – Brownies – Morag Scorgie (01674 820721)

7.15 pm – Guides

7.30 pm – Women's Group – first Wednesdays – Elaine Fair (873238)

**THURSDAY**

10.00 am – Parent and Toddler Group – Joan Archer (876522)

2.00 pm – Friend's Club : first Thursdays – L Smith – B Gerrard, secretary (434821)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

6.00 pm – BB Junior Section – W Ewart (876114)

7.30 pm – BB Company Section – M Clark (437758)

**FRIDAY**

9.30 am – Coffee morning

11.00 am – Havilah – Drop-in Centre – Church Office (431135)

**Intimations, changes of address, hall bookings etc., please contact Alison Davie at the Church office, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon and for 15 minutes after Sunday Service, telephone 431135.**

**Please call 431135 in the event of corrections or omissions, and an updated sheet will be produced.**

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

# Martin Fair



March 2010

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this edition of QUEST, it's likely that a good number of you will have enjoyed the hospitality of the congregation at one or other of two special gatherings. First of all, on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March, we welcomed a number of our older members who, until then, had not been able to see the newly refurbished buildings for themselves. Ruth, our Associate Minister, led a short service and, following a tour, those present sat down for a well-deserved cuppie!

But still to come (as of the time of writing,) many more of you will be set to enjoy a special meal organised and served by the members of our Youth Group (scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> March.) In the main, those present will be our more senior members but, with the numbers involved, not everyone in that category will have received an invite this time around. Don't take offence! There's bound to be another opportunity to come.

The most important aspect of this special event is that it sees the coming together of old and young within the congregation. St. Andrew's prides itself on being a genuine family of faith – a church in which everyone counts! In so many places, the generations find themselves being divided; there are activities and clubs for young people and other ones for older people. There's a place for that. But in church we need to celebrate that which we share in common – regardless of age.

In this instance, our young people are going to be doing the serving – and the washing up! You don't have to look too hard to find young people getting *bad press*. How grateful we should be, therefore, that we have a group of young people of whom we can be justly proud; young people ready to do their bit and to serve and show proper respect for their seniors. Look out for next month's QUEST in which we'll carry pictures of the event!



God bless,

Martin, Elaine, Callum, Andrew, Fraser and Flossie!

MartinFair@sky.com

## Parish Development Fund

Most of us are aware of what our minister does locally. Of course, along with Ruth he leads our services and offers pastoral care and overall leadership to the congregation. Then there are the schools to which he is chaplain and the host of other groups and organisations that he engages with.

But much more unseen is his work beyond the bounds of the parish. Like all ministers, he is duty bound to play his part in the wider church – both regionally and nationally. And so there are various Presbytery commitments and meetings to be held with local clergy etc. Beyond that, our own minister serves the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland by speaking at various of its conferences. Already this year, he has travelled to Aberfoyle

to speak to the annual gathering of probationer ministers, to Dunkeld to speak to those in their first year in ministry and to Tulliallan to speak at a conference of those thinking about whether to enter ministry or not. And, if it hadn't been for the snow, he would have been in Fraserburgh to speak to a regional gathering of lay readers!!

Over and above these various commitments, our minister has for the last four years been convener of the Church of Scotland's Parish Development Fund. The PDF makes grants to churches as they seek to develop new forms of service and outreach to their local communities. With millions of pounds in grants having been made during that time, clearly this has been a position of some responsibility – not

least in recent times as he has had to bear more of the decision-making pressure due to staff shortage. But the end is now in sight! His time as convener of the Fund comes to an end at this year's General Assembly. On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May he will address the General Assembly of the Church – giving a report on the work of the PDF during the last year – and then will be thanks and discharged by the Moderator (this year, an old friend from Divinity College!!)

Martin has seen this work as being an enormous privilege but, none-the-less, will be glad to lay it aside at this time. One can only wonder as to whether or not this will mean that he has more time on his hands or if the church has something new for him up its sleeve!



## Malawi News

This month I thought I would introduce you to Kiri who is the administrator for our Centre in Thyolo.

Full name: Christina Chipanga (also known as Kiri)

Age: 23

Nationality: Malawian

Born: Mwanza

Kiri was born and brought up in Mwanza district of Malawi where Aquaid have a daycare centre. When it was time for Kiri to go to secondary school she was selected to go to a boarding school because she had very good grades but unfortunately the fees are higher there. She applied to Aquaid but was declined in the first year and her mother managed to scrape together enough money for her to go. However by her second year the harvest had been small and her Mum was still struggling from giving away so much money the previous year and so could not afford to send Kiri to school. She again applied to Aquaid for funding and this time was accepted. Aquaid then paid for her school fees until she left school.

On leaving school Kiri assisted in the daycare at Mwanza: cooking for the children, playing with them and teaching them. She proved herself to be very enthusiastic and willing to turn her hand to anything. When John Searle visited the centre he was very impressed with her and when he heard her excellent school grades he agreed to pay for



her to go on to further education. Since Kiri had always loved cars and had seen a few of the Aquaid vehicles, she chose the mechanics course. Again here she proved a very diligent student and passed very well and was greatly appreciated at all her placements. However the severe lack of jobs for mechanics in Malawi meant that when she graduated in November 2008 she had no job. However her charismatic personality had convinced John Searle that she would be perfect for a leadership role within Aquaid so after some time with Kiri assisting at Namisu in the main office being trained up, she was given the job of administrator of the St Andrews Church daycare centre at Thyolo.

Kiri, from her wages, has been buying many pieces of furniture for her office and home and also funds her younger sister, who now lives with her, through secondary school. Kiri is a very enthusiastic member of her local church and prays consistently for so many people and projects, never forgetting to thank God for how he has helped her. She also encourages her children to pray and trust in God. She loves playing with the children and regularly checks up on their situations at home. She is an intelligent young woman who has made friends with the local police force and with the various government departments.

In Malawi to get anywhere quickly you generally have to bribe your way or know someone in authority so Kiri has cleverly built up friendships in all the right places! We have been really impressed at how she is running the Centre at Thyolo and know that it is in good hands.

## Holiday Club

With over twenty holiday clubs for children under our collective belt, we can safely say that, by now, we have a fair idea of what we're doing! Even so, the same level of excitement is in the air as we prepare for this year's club, which is entitled **Rocky's Plaice**.

Telling the story of Peter and of the amazing way in which the early Church grew under the power of the Holy Spirit, this club is designed to excite children – from within the Church and beyond – about what God has done and is still doing! It will involve all of the usual fun and games, mixed in with simple Christian teaching and, as always, will be open to all children from the primary school age range. It will run from

**Monday to Friday,  
10am – 12noon,  
from the 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> April.**

**Registration, which is strongly recommended, takes place on the Saturday morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> April.**

Make sure that you child has a place booked to avoid any potential disappointment! Can you believe it that two of our young girls were so distraught to be told that they were going to miss the club this year – due to a family trip to the USA – that the holiday plans had to be completely changed.

Now that tells you how much children enjoy the annual holiday club.

Everyone can play a part. Soon, we'll be publishing the list of materials that we need for our craft sessions. As usual, we'll need plenty of volunteers for making soup and providing goodies for the team lunches. We'll need members of the team, of course – anyone with a love of children and a week's worth of energy and enthusiasm! (Child protection clearance is required as with all elements of our work among children and young people.)

**ROCKY'S  
plaice**

Then there's *Chocolate Biscuit Sunday* at which point you can give some *Twix* or *Kit-kat* bars for the children's snack time. And, as important as all of the above, we need people who will pray for the club!

Watch this space and let's make sure that *Rocky's Plaice* really is the place to be this Easter!

(P.S. There are no spelling errors in the title!)

## Paired Reading at Hayshead

Five volunteers have regularly come along to help support pupils at Hayshead. These people - Tania Lorimer, Elaine Kay, Julia Pannell, Sharon Hamilton and Bill Marshall have made a wonderful contribution to our school by reading, baking, playing games, knitting and working on

projects. It is not just the pupils they work with who benefit, but also the staff and other pupils who feel supported by the community outside the school.

The children they have worked with range in age from Nursery to Primary 7, from individuals to small groups. I hope they enjoy coming in as much as we appreciate them being here. We are currently very sorry that Bill is no longer able to continue with us. He is however leaving on a high as

not only has he worked with Primary 4 pupils (with whom he is a great favourite) but he has been our Eco School Community link. Two weeks ago Hayshead was awarded Green Flag status and Bill's work towards this is enormously appreciated.

We are most grateful for this consistent support from people who already have busy lives.

Anne

## GUILD NEWS

Our Burns Night went well on the 25th January. We were very fortunate to have Rusty Smith address the haggis, and recite some poetry and Jack Newth on the pipes. Shona Kemp, Wilma Ewart and Stuart Low provided the entertainment with accompaniment by Winnie Sangster. Thank you to all who attended and helped to make the night a success.

We have had two very interesting talks during February. On the 8th we welcomed Anne Webster from Ashbrook Nurseries who brought an amazing amount of plants to show us how to keep our gardens looking cheerful during the winter months. On the 22nd our evening was on HIV/Aids - A New Hunger, our project for this year. We were delighted to have Donna Hayes with us. She delivered a very interesting talk with slides and gave us a wee quiz to see how much we knew about the Aids virus and its

treatment. As it was the beginning of Fair-Trade fortnight we also had a stall from Oyster Craft. This was an open night, and so we had guests from other guilds and the congregation. Thanks to those who came along.

Our March meetings are the 8th and 22nd when we will have talks by the Bible Society and an Occupation Night by Joyce Lownie and Joyce MacPherson. They will give us an insight into their chosen careers.

Please feel free to come along.

## Clerk's Corner - Caring

### Caring for each other

Since we moved back to our beautiful refurbished sanctuary it has been necessary to form various teams of volunteers for the many tasks which help us to have a well-organised approach to our structures. Now we have another team in place and while we hope that you won't need their services, it is nevertheless an important part of caring for each other. What team is this? It is a team of members with skills in first aid. Whenever anyone is unwell, there will be a response from members of the team to assist appropriately. Each week there will be several people available to help, and wherever you sit in church you will be able to be helped if necessary.

### Caring for our world

Your response to the request to gather the tops from plastic milk cartons has been excellent. Already two large bags of them have been delivered to the Old and Abbey Church and will be sent from there to the source which recycles them into toys. Well done! Keep collecting as there is probably the potential for a congregation of our size to have around 200 tops every week!

### Caring for our church and community

There has already been a good response for the creation of an Events Team, members of which will be on a rota to

be present at events being held by outside organisations. We have already had two of these - a children's party and a coffee morning where one member of the Events Team was on hand at each function. They were not 'working' at these events, but were there to ensure that everything was in place for the smooth running of the event and that the premises were secure. This will not usually be an onerous task and will be even easier if we have a large number in the team so that a request for help will not need to be made very often.

Could you help with this? You will be provided with the date well in advance. Once the complete team has been established, a short meeting will be held to explain all the likely procedures which will occur. Please let me or Alison at the office know as soon as possible if you would be willing to join the team.

By the time you have read this, the March meeting of Angus Presbytery will have taken place in St Andrew's and four elders and a small group to provide teas will have been the volunteers on duty. They will have had the pleasure of showing off our sanctuary and gallery to ministers and elders from all over Angus. There are several other events already booked in the diary.

Alison Davie and Margot Cunningham were on hand for the party and the coffee morning - thank you ladies!

Jane Miller

## The Good Old Days?

To all the kids who survived the 1930s 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s !! First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they were pregnant. They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes. Then after that trauma, we were put to sleep on our tummies in baby cribs covered with bright coloured lead based paints. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets, not to mention the risks we took hitchhiking.

As infants and children, we would ride in cars with no car seats, booster seats, seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pick up on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle. We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and NO ONE actually died from this. We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank Cola made with sugar, but we weren't overweight because WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. And we were O.K. We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem. We did not have Playstations, Nintendos, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 150 channels on cable, no video movies or DVDs, no

surround sound or CDs, no cell phones, no personal computers, no Internet or chat rooms ..... WE HAD FRIENDS and we went outside and found them!

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever. We were given pellet guns for our 10th birthdays, made up games with sticks and tennis balls and, although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes. We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just walked in and talked to them!

Football and Hockey teams had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that !! The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law! These generations have produced some of the best risk takers, problem solvers and inventors ever! The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL !

If YOU are one of them - CONGRATULATIONS! You might want to share this with others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before the lawyers and the government regulated so much of our lives for our own good. And while you are at it, forward it to your kids so they will know how brave (and lucky) their parents were.

Kind of makes you want to run through the house with scissors, doesn't it?!

## Fair Trade in St Andrew's Church

The Rev Martin Fair would like the congregation to endeavour to become accredited as a Fair Trade congregation. There are certain things we must do, but we will rise to the challenge.

Alice Dewar and Mary Reid will have a stall on a quarterly basis selling Fair Trade goods. They will be talking to different organisations in the church to ask them to use Fair Trade coffee, tea and sugar.

Please consider their request as we need to make changes to reach required targets.

The Oyster Craft shop is on the West Port and is run by Gail Davison and her team of volunteers from Monday to Saturday with opening times being 10am to 4.30pm. Gail will supply the goods for our stall. Please visit the shop as they have a wide range of goods.

The first stall will be on Sunday 7th March manned by Mary and Alice. Future stalls will be held on 6th June, 5th September and 5th December when you will be able to purchase goods.

Please support us in this venture.

Alice and Mary

## LOOKING AHEAD

### MARCH

**Sunday 7**  
11 am - Worship Service  
With special feature on the *persecuted church*  
8 pm - OFF the W.O.L.

**Sunday 14**  
11 am - Worship Service  
Our very own  
*Spring Harvest service!*

**Sunday 21**  
11 am - Worship Service  
Main service followed by  
short celebration of  
Communion

**Sunday 28**  
11 am - Worship Service  
4 pm - **Messy Church**

### APRIL

**Sunday 4**  
8 am - Sunrise service ; in the  
grounds of the Abbey,  
followed by breakfast with our  
friends from Old & Abbey  
11 am - Easter Family  
Celebration with communion  
for all ages

**Sunday 11**  
11 am - Worship Service  
Including a Holiday Club  
thanksgiving!

**Sunday 18**  
11 am - Worship Service

**Sunday 25**  
11 am - Worship Service  
with Sacrament of Baptism  
AND special guest,  
Michele Guinness  
4 pm - **Messy Church**

N.B. As well as the services above there is the following:

- ◆ A 40 minute service every Wednesday morning at 10.30am.
- ◆ Messy Church, from 4-6pm, generally on the last Sunday of every month. Two hours for all the family with games, craft and worship and an all-together meal.
- ◆ OFF the W.O.L. contemporary worship on the first Sunday of each month, 8 - 9pm

## Church Noticeboard

No God - no peace  
Know God - know peace!

## Bulletin Blunders

Thank goodness for human error that can make us smile. These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services .....

- ◆ The price of the 'Fasting and Prayer' conference includes all meals.
- ◆ The sermon this morning is "Jesus walks on water". The sermon tonight is "Searching for Jesus".
- ◆ The Peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict in our diaries.
- ◆ Don't let worry kill you - let the church help.
- ◆ Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again", giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- ◆ For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- ◆ Barbara remains in hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons.
- ◆ The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing "Break Forth into Joy".
- ◆ Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24th in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- ◆ At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- ◆ Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you wish to be remembered.
- ◆ The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.

## Spring Harvest

The more observant among you would have noticed that we didn't hold a Harvest Thanksgiving service last autumn! In the main, that was due to uncertainty about when we would be allowed back into our buildings at the completion of the refurbishment programme.

And so, to make up for that omission, we're holding our very own Spring Harvest service on 14<sup>th</sup> March!! During that service, we will focus on thanksgiving and, just as we usually do at Harvest-time, on our resultant responsibilities.

## Sky High

An airliner flew into a violent thunderstorm and was soon bumping around in the sky. One very nervous lady happened to be sitting next to a clergyman and turned to him for comfort.

"Can't you do something?" she demanded forcefully.

"I'm sorry, Madam," said the Reverend gently, "but I'm in sales, not management!"

- ◆ Potluck Supper Sunday at 5.00pm - prayer and medication to follow.
- ◆ The Eighth Graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement, Friday at 7:00pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- ◆ The Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet every Thursday at 7:00pm. Please use the back door.
- ◆ Weight Watchers will meet at 7:00pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use the large double doors at the side entrance.

## Dispelling A Myth!

Despite rumours you may have heard, there has never been anything wrong with our underfloor heating system!

Way back in mid-November, a serious leak was detected when the pressure began to drop quickly. It was difficult to determine where it was, but experimenting finally revealed that it was somewhere in the pipes that fed the radiators in the Sanctuary - but it was not in the underfloor heating pipes!

From mid-November to mid-February this meant that air was constantly getting into the system - despite our daily

efforts to try to maintain the pressure. This resulted in radiators that could not work at full potential and had to be constantly bled of air. Allied to that, the original pipework in the boiler room was not sufficient to efficiently feed the heat to all areas.

However, over the last few weeks, our main contractor has acted decisively. The leak has been repaired and extensive work done to improve the heat flow. Thus far, the results are very encouraging and hopefully time will confirm that we now have an effective and very efficient system.

We thank everyone for their patience on those Sundays during the excessively cold spell when we were somewhat cool, and on the other days when the heating had to be off to allow the remedial work to progress.

We are delighted to announce that renowned columnist, broadcaster and speaker, Michele Guinness, is to be our guest over the weekend 24-25<sup>th</sup> April!! Michele has written seven books and is a regular presenter at major Christian gatherings and festivals.

Married now to a minister, her faith journey started deep within the traditions of Judaism. She describes what happened as her journey continued:

*I loved the festivals: Judaism is a very colourful faith. All of our festivals were celebrated in the home. I used to love going to my Grandmothers for Passover. The smell, the drama, the history, the stories and you know the worship and the laughter and the jokes and the food; everything is totally integrated in Judaism. So that was the great part. On the other hand there was always a bit sort of for me missing at the end of the story, that I couldn't quite work out. You know - here we were told that we have this great God who'd looked after us through the centuries; yet of course I had to come to terms with the Holocaust as well, as a Jewish child. If I had been there what would have happened to me? There was always this sense that God was a God of history but he wasn't near, he wasn't close. One day a friend of mine suggested I read the New Testament. I couldn't find one; then I remembered that*

## Michele Guinness

*it was probably on my parents' forbidden books shelf along with Lady Chatterley's Lover and that's exactly where I found it. I took it to my room with the Lady Chatterley and started to read it by torchlight under the bedclothes because it's forbidden. I had Lady Chatterley on one side and I had John's Gospel on the other that I was reading. I have to say that there was nothing in Lady Chatterley that precocious little wretches don't know already, but... there is everything in John's gospel. It was a total revelation. I mean I knew nothing about Jesus whatsoever. My little nephew always said when he was little*



*- he's big now - Easter's about someone who died on a cross, but' sshh' we don't say who. I mean I knew nothing. As I read John's gospel; this man just seemed to be the most amazing man who'd ever lived and he spoke truth. I thought, I've got to decide either he is who he says he is, the Messiah or he's completely bonkers and just a charlatan. All of it was truth and to me no-one had ever spoken like that man. I was just completely*

*knocked over by him. I thought, I can't believe he doesn't tell the truth and I can't believe he isn't real. I just said I want to follow you and knowing what that would cost. I thought oh heck - my parents what are they going to say; I'll get turfed out; it's going to cost me my community, my friends and my relationships, everything and everyone I know. I just felt he was worth following; he was just so real to me; he'd become so real and it's not been easy but it's been wonderful.*

## Shades of Ricki Fulton!

Martin is never afraid of going to any lengths to get the message across!

One week we had an hilarious attempt at 'Walking the Walk' with the Bee Gees. Here we see Martin teaching us about ingredients such as peppers. But, unlike Ricki Fulton's Sunday Peppers, we are all important ingredients in the Master Chef's mix - and without any one of us, the mix is all the poorer. And week by week, our worship is all the more rich for each of us being there.

Have you been missing from the mix? Come to worship next Sunday and read the Sunday Papers in the afternoon instead - you will add so much to the mix, and you might even get a very good cookery lesson at the same time!

Perhaps what makes Michele so likeable is that she is so thoroughly down-to-earth, practical and, with that, very witty!

With Michele as our special guest, we're hosting a woman's supper evening on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April. This presents us with an ideal opportunity to bring a friend from outwith the Church. Sometimes we worry that we'll be embarrassed by what a speaker has to say; what will our friends make of it? You can be completely at ease with Michele and need have no such fears. So, go on - make some plans now for who you might bring along to that evening.

Then, on the Sunday morning, Michele will be our guest in worship - an opportunity for all of us to enjoy her message and, again, an ideal opportunity to invite a friend.

Watch out for more details as we get nearer to the event!

