



November 2010

Harvest Thanksgiving

What a wonderful celebration we enjoyed together on the occasion of our Harvest Thanksgiving Festival!

The Church had been beautifully prepared by the members of our Flower Club, with a well-designed, colourful display at the front representing the harvest of both land and sea.

One or two people had asked if they were to bring a gift to the service. Though there may well be such opportunities in times to come, we are very aware of the following:

○ A tremendous amount has been asked of the congregation in recent times

○ Many of you are, in fact, making your Harvest gift throughout the whole year! And that, of course, is the ideal way. Giving out of the good things we have been blessed with should be a way of life and not an occasional effort. So around seventy of you are sponsoring children in Malawi and many more of you support such fund-raising opportunities as are offered.

○ For many, these are not the easiest of times, financially speaking. Well done, therefore, for your continued loyalty to the world's poorest and to God's command that we do not forget those who need us most.



Superhero with Jose Zayas



On Friday evening, 26th November, St. Andrew's Church is hosting what should be a great evening of worship, Christian witness and performance music. Joining us again are *Superhero*, the Christian indie-rock band, who will lead congregational praise before offering a concert of their own music. But joining them on this tour is Jose Zayas, international evangelist.

Before starting his own ministry, Jose was on the staff with the Luis Palau Association. "I've worked with Jose for over a decade," Luis Palau says. "I've observed his passion for preaching the Gospel. And I have no doubt God is going

to use him to help reach the next generation for Jesus Christ."

Whether in the United States, Asia, Europe, Africa, or India, sharing the Gospel in a culturally relevant way is the heartbeat of Jose's ministry. Using humour and everyday illustrations, he communicates the timeless truths of the Bible in today's language.



So, what a treat that we've got such an event coming to OUR Church! Now is the time to be marking the date in your diary and to be letting others know about it. **Why not get thinking now about who you might invite to come along to share in the evening!**

CONTACTS

CHURCH OFFICE : 431135

Alison Davie

Monday to Friday
9 am to noon

MINISTER

Rev Dr W Martin Fair, BA, BD
873238

MINISTER EMERITUS

David Searle

SESSION CLERK

Jane Miller : 875235

TREASURER

Derek Scott : 878305

FREEWILL ENVELOPES

Ian Robertson : 877519

CHURCH OFFICER

Janis Clark : 878594

PASTORAL CARE

Kim Marr : 430505

YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR

Sheila Dunphy : 873218

ORGANIST

Jane Miller : 875235

FABRIC CONVENOR

Ray Reaney : 07803 235418

SUNDAY CLUB

Elaine Fair : 873238

FLOWER CONVENOR

Margaret McIntosh : 876993

PRAYER CO-ORDINATOR

Judy Spink : 872395

SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR

Norma Beattie : 873442

ADMINISTRATOR and BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER

Alison Davie : 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR/CDs

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH REGISTER OF MEMBERS

October 2010

Baptisms - Sam, son of Fraser & Gillian
Tennant

Weddings - None

Funerals - None

IMPORTANT DATES

DECEMBER 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 November (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 23rd November (Word-Processed file)

SPREAD THE WORD WORLDWIDE!

Do you have friends who would like to see Quest every month or listen to the sermon each week? Then tell them about our website where they can download Quest and the sermon in a matter of a few seconds at -

www.arbroathstandrews.org.uk.

CDs of Services

These are available for any housebound members who are unable to attend either Sunday or Wednesday services. If interested, please contact Ken Miller on 875235.

For all other members, please note that the weekly sermons go on our website and are therefore accessible for those who may miss some of them due to being on holidays etc.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

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

12.00 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)

12.00 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

12.00 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.

Martin Fair

November 2010

Dear friends,

I'm grateful to Lawrence Davie who volunteered to share some of the work of preparing the Home Group study materials while I was on holiday. In particular, he prepared some great studies on the wonderful Old Testament book of Ruth – a much-loved book by many. Lawrence asked us to think about the loyalty that Ruth showed to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and then challenged us to think about ways in which we, as Christians, need to be loyal.

I'm conscious that I have much to be grateful for in terms of the people that we have at St. Andrew's. We have what I consider to be something near the perfect combination – ability and availability. That is, we have people who have particular gifts and skills but over and above that, people who are ready to use what they have in service within the Church and community – all for the glory of God. Even in this last week:

- Gaynor used her arts and crafts skills to produce a beautiful memento for the Tennant family who had brought their son, Sam, to be baptised (something she is now doing for all such occasions!)
- The Flower Club members prepared a wonderful display for our Harvest celebration, beautifying our sanctuary and reminding us all of what we have to be thankful for
- Doris and her team provided a lovely sit down meal for the fifty-plus people who attended the *Alpha* opening
- Jean and Jessie, and others, spent hours cleaning the glass doors and screens at the back of the church!
- Ian and the two Davids, along with Mike, travelled to Edzell on our behalf to lead a worship evening for the women of the Guilds in that area
- And, of course, Ken edited and produced this magazine that you're reading now!!

There's no need to go on – though I could. The point is that I never feel alone in ministering at St. Andrew's and no minister ever should. It's not the job of one person in the church – it's what all God's people do together. And when it's going well, it really is great fun to be part of!

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

martin.fair@sky.com

Angus Ambassador Awards

Some of you might have noticed in the local press mention of the fact that we have been nominated for an Angus Ambassador Award – recognition indeed! Though the minister was named in the article, he is quick to point out that the nomination was drafted by the local community police officers, principally in recognition of our Havilah work. Since early days, we've worked closely with the police and other authorities and it's gratifying to know that there has been recognition of the value of what we've been doing.

In terms of recognition, it was even more heart-warming to meet recently with a grandmother who reported that she had been in absolute despair concerning her grandson who had, for some years, been hopelessly addicted to drugs. Now, she is saying a big thank you to Havilah that he has made so much progress and seems to have turned the corner towards getting his life back on track.

That's the kind of good news story we will never get tired of hearing!

The *DECLARATION* 2011

***A day of Challenge and
Encouragement for Men***

Saturday 15th January 2011

10am - 4pm, in the church

With special guest speaker

Ian Coffey

Cost £10 includes tea/coffee and snack lunch.
(£8 if booked by 30th November).

Ask at the office for more
information and registration form.

GUILD NEWS

There have been 2 Guild meetings since the last Quest. The 4th of October our meeting was on Tangible Texts where we split into 4 teams to search through our bible for texts which had food items mentioned in them. There was a table of produce set out to give some clues, from water and salt to olives and figs and a few 'red herrings' such as beet-root and hot chocolate just to confuse matters! Before discussing some scenarios on showing mercy, we had a quick round of Kim's game where the table was covered and the groups had to recall the items which were on show.

On the 18th, though I was on holiday and sorry to miss it, we had ex-policeman Bob Carswell give a talk on the history of Arbroath Police. By all accounts the night was really informative and we were grateful to Mr Carswell for giving up his evening to talk to us. Thank you to Shona and others for leading the evening.

Our next meeting is the 1st November when we will have visiting guilds join us as we discuss and hear about our current project for the year, International Justice Mission. IJM rescues people from slavery and forced prostitution in countries where they cannot rely on national authorities for help. We will also have a sales table that evening. On the 15th we will welcome the Jam factory to give us a talk and on the 29th we have our Topic evening – Called to love Mercy. All these will be intimated in the bulletin.

November is a very busy month for us as Guild week also starts on 21st and we are having a fundraiser on Saturday 27th. This will be a soup and pudding lunch and tickets are now available. Also we are having a visit from our Guild link partners later that day, and after showing them round our refurbished church and halls, we will join them for high tea. Looking back on this article it does appear November will be an exhausting but exciting time for the Guild. Why not come along and join us.

Doris Bowie

Malawi Gifts For Christmas

Lots of you have supported the work in Malawi over the last few years by using our Alternative Christmas Gift Catalogue. This year again we are offering you a chance to choose from a list of different gifts that will benefit one of the children at the centres we support - St Andrew's Daycare and Residence in Thyolo and our daycare at Kambilonjo - or the village at Namisu village all run by Aquaid Lifeline. Instead of struggling to find a gift for someone who has everything they could possibly

need, why not give them a gift of sending it to a child in Malawi who has so little. We can assure you that the money that you give is used for the gift that you specify.

There are a variety of gifts to choose from – medicine, meal for 70 children, bunk bed, school trip and even a borehole! Prices start from £5.

To find out more please pick up one of our catalogues from the church office or from Sheila directly. You choose the gift you would like

to purchase, then one of the Christmas Cards that we have which will tell about the gift that you have chosen. You can then send it to a family member or friend and give them a gift that will give twice!

Christmas is the time when most of us end up with so much that we don't need or want, so let's do something different this Christmas and remember those who have nothing!

After all isn't Christmas about giving?!

Contact the Elderly

Contact the Elderly is a registered charity with around 320 groups in Scotland. Next year it will celebrate its fortieth birthday. I am a volunteer with CtE and coordinate the only group in Angus. I would like to see several new groups started before our fortieth birthday and for that we need volunteers - we have no problem finding guests.

CtE consists of volunteer drivers, volunteer hosts, and elderly guests and the aim is to provide friendship and company for people over 75 who need a little help getting out of the house and who have limited contact with friends and family.

One Sunday a month, volunteer drivers each collect two or three elderly guests and take them to a volunteer host (a different one each month) for afternoon tea, arriving at 2pm and leaving at 4pm. This simple idea makes an unbelievable difference to our guests who feel they are part of society again, make friends and feel that someone cares. Our volunteers help through kindness, not obligation or because it is their job.

When people get older they often have social contact through an institution or something like a coffee morning. With CtE our guests are welcomed into people's homes which makes a real difference and makes them feel part of normal life.

To be a volunteer driver you need a driver's licence, a safe car and be able to stay and enjoy the party. CtE also requires drivers to go through the disclosure process which is paid for by CtE. To be a host you require a downstairs loo, not too many steps, a large teapot and a warm smile! It is not a huge commitment, but it is a commitment as we never let an old person down. We try to have spare drivers to cover for holidays, illness etc.

I have a wonderful group of volunteers who enjoy the outings just as much as our guests, become very fond of our elderly friends and this fondness is certainly reciprocated. If you feel you would like to make a difference, please contact me, **Jean Malcolm on 01356 660238 or email me at jeanmalcolm@btinternet.com**

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Malawi Update

Hi Everyone,

I have to apologise for the delay in this update. I was hoping that I'd have everyone's email addresses by this time, but progress in this area has been slower than previously anticipated! If you do know of anyone who hasn't sent me their email address please encourage them to do so. We will of course print this update but emails save our carbon footprint as well as printing costs!

The Malawian exam results came out at the start of October. To set the scene, in Malawi there are 3 major exams. At the end of a pupil's 8 years of primary education, they will sit the 'Primary School Leaving Certificate' (PSLC). Then the first two years of Secondary school are spent preparing for the 'Junior Certificate of Education' (JCE) and in the final two years of secondary (3rd and 4th years) they work towards the 'Malawi School Certificate of Education' (MSCE). Since the daycare started recently and works primarily with primary children, it did not start with any secondary aged orphans. However the first daycare pupil to sit PSLC, did so this year. Jean Maluwa, a 13 year old girl sat her primary school leaving school exams this year and did exceptionally well. In Malawi there are 3 main levels of secondary school. There is 'national' level, 'district' and then there are the 'local' schools. Local schools are day secondary schools where pupils learn throughout the morning and then head back home at 1pm or 2pm. However, depending on the exam results at PSLC, pupils can be selected to district or national level secondary schools. These schools have qualified teachers and at national level may even have computers, Bunsen Burners etc. These schools also teach French and 'Physical Science' - a mix between Chemistry and Physics. These among other subjects improve pupil's employability profoundly and, since the schools are boarding schools with much higher quality teaching and full days, the pupils get much better chances of good results in their future exams. Jean did very well and managed to be selected to a district level school - Lochenza Secondary School. This is a great achievement as these schools are very difficult to get into. We are very proud of Jean, our first secondary pupil and are sure she will do very well in the future. Jean wants to be a lawyer. Hopefully she will work hard and achieve her dreams.

Each year at Primary and Secondary, pupils have to pass exams to move up a year. The daycare pupils performed well and most have moved up this year. We now have 4

Standard 8s who are preparing for their PSLC soon. There are two boys- Damiano Frank and Brian Phiri, and two girls - Ellen Nachuma and Yasinta Banda. They are at present working very hard and I believe will do well. There are also 9 in Standard 7, 9 in Standard 6, and 9 in Standard 5. We have 14 Standard 4 pupils, 12 Standard 3s, 15 Standard 2s, 13 in Standard 1 and 19 in the nursery.

The daycare centre has been going well. There has been a new trainee teacher who has been assisting in the classes. She is an orphan who was supported all the way through school by Aquaid at another daycare centre and now, having completed school, is hoping to do nursing. Her name is Triza Crighton and she is 18 years old. Christina the administrator at Thyolo has nothing but good to say about her. She has been teaching the children other methods for cultivating crops and has just planted the children's maize crop with them. She has also been teaching them lots of singing and dancing. It is great to see these young people whom Aquaid have supported, finishing their education and beginning their work. They are now able to support other members of their family.

Christina wants to let her brothers and sisters in Scotland know that she is preparing to sit some further education exams in December. She has been learning long distance at the College as she wants to "be able to do her job better." She has funded herself through these modules and is preparing to sit Accounting (2nd Dec) and Practical Maths (3rd Dec). She would be very grateful for your prayers. As always Christina is doing a great job and working exceptionally hard!

Please remember to pray for your child and for the daycare centre as a whole. Pray for Triza and her family and thank God for the daycare centre at Maliya which has supported her throughout her education.

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch,

'My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him.

He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken'

Psalm 62 v 1-2

(Modesta Matthews wanted to share this verse!)

God Bless

Becky

FUNDRAISING Saturday 11th December

Coffee Morning

Church Hall 10am – 12 noon

Includes Cake and Candy Stall
and
special festive goodies!

Children's Murder Mystery

Church Hall 3 - 5pm

A children's version of our Popular Murder Mystery Evening. This event also includes a meal. A chance too for you adults to leave the children and do some last minute Christmas Shopping!

ECO CONGREGATION

Now that we are registered as an eco-congregation – and aiming towards receiving an eco-award somewhere down the line! – it's important that lots of us start to get a little more deliberate in terms of reducing the impact we make on the planet. This isn't just about trendy political agendas; it's to do with our understanding of what it means to be God-appointed stewards of creation.

So, here are some tips for a strategy to reduce your household carbon footprint by 5% - a real move in the right direction. You can begin by measuring your carbon footprint using the tool that is provided on the eco-congregation website:

www.ecocongregation.org/scotland

Take action in your lives. As with church buildings, we suggest you set a target to aim at. When you know the carbon footprint of your homes and car travel, can you make a commitment to reduce this by 5% this year and go on to reduce you emissions by 5% each year thereafter? It might be easier than you think. Reducing unnecessary consumption is the key. By not travelling when you don't need to, or by cutting back a little on the things you buy or use, you can start making inroads to your carbon footprint. To achieve a 5% reduction, consider the following pointers from the UK Government's ActonCO2 website.

In the home

- If you have a loft, check the insulation – is it 270mm thick? Fitting this amount of insulation could save up to £150 a year on heating bills.
- If you have a hot water tank fit an

insulating jacket at least 75mm thick and save up to £30 a year.

- If you have cavity walls save up to £120 a year by installing cavity wall insulation.

- Find out more at:

<http://campaigns2.direct.gov.uk/actonco2/home/in-the-home.html>

On the move

- If you drive a car, do you have the most fuel efficient car for your needs? It is estimated that buying the most fuel efficient car in its class could reduce emissions by 24% and save three month's worth of fuel a year.

- Can you find an alternative to using a car or share a journey for some of your trips?

An average car commuter drives 12 miles a day and reducing this by half could save 400kg of CO2 a year or 170 litres of fuel.

- Smarter driving could reduce your fuel consumption by 8% a year – see website for more details:

<http://campaigns2.direct.gov.uk/actonco2/home/on-the-move.html>

Out shopping

- When purchasing white goods, look for the energy label or energy-saving recommended logo.

- Producing, processing and transporting food may be responsible for up to a third of your carbon footprint, yet the average UK house spends £420 a year on food that could be eaten but is thrown away. How do you manage your food shopping?

- UK consumers buy about 2 million tonnes of clothes a year with a carbon footprint of 3.1 million tons: how do you shop for clothes?

- Find out more on:

<http://campaigns2.direct.gov.uk/actonco2/home/out-shopping.html>

Alpha Launch

The great news is that virtually every seat was taken at our Alpha launch evening on Wednesday evening 27th October. Including leaders, that amounted to over fifty men and women, ranging in ages from those in their twenties to some in their eighties! And, though there were some who are regulars in Church and are doing Alpha by way of getting back to basics, there were plenty of others from outwith our membership.

We were joined on the evening by a representative from Alpha Scotland headquarters and by a young man, Jamie, who shared with us something of his story and in particular of how doing an Alpha course had been instrumental in terms of him getting his life on track following a series of

family tragedies.

Apart from a couple of people who are going to wait for a future course owing to upcoming holidays etc., everyone who came to the launch evening has committed to coming to the course itself. So, all of us are thoroughly looking forward to getting stuck in and to getting to grips with some of the really big questions of life, not least concerning Jesus and the meaning and purpose of our lives.

(Thanks again to Doris and the Fellowship Core Group for their brilliant restaurant-standard catering service!)

LOOKING AHEAD

NOVEMBER

Sunday 7
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 14
10.50 am - Worship Service
Including an
Act of Remembrance

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

Sunday 28
11 am - Worship Service
4-6 pm - **Messy Church**
8pm - Off the W.O.L

DECEMBER

Sunday 5
11 am - Worship Service
2nd in Advent

Sunday 12
11 am - Worship Service
3rd in Advent

Sunday 19
11 am - Worship Service
4th in Advent
Main service followed by
short Communion

Friday 24
6.30 pm - Nativity and
Christingle Service
11.15 pm - Traditional
Watchnight Service

Saturday 25th
10.30 am - Christmas Day
Celebration for the
whole family

Sunday 26
11 am - Worship Service

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

Nurture Core Group

The remit of the Nurture Group is very wide and as such is a challenge to the members. A lot of our work is back room stuff and that also can make it difficult to assess how effective we are. Our remit is as follows

*to resource and support all aspects of children and youth work

*to develop patterns of adult education according to the needs of the congregation

*to work with staff members and key individuals to ensure ongoing professional development

*to identify and provide training as required

*specifically, to ensure best practice in terms of The Church of Scotland's Protection of Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

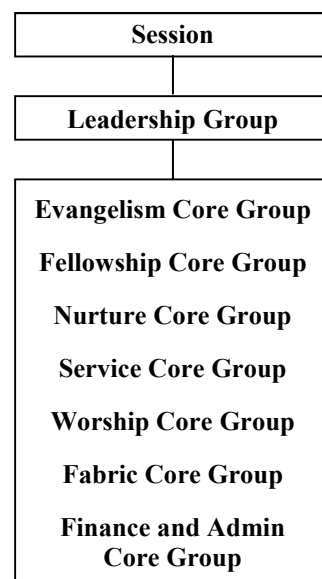
Our first task was to support Eleanor Mands in completing our Child Protection or Safe Guarding (as it is now known) within the congregation. As we now have such a large and diverse work this was no

mean task. We also ran a conference for all those involved in children and youth work in St Andrew's, 'From Weans to Teens and In between's'. Another venture was to have a training meeting for those involved in leading core group meetings or similar within the congregation, 'Meeting Makeover'. Leading seems an easy thing to do but not so easy to do so effectively and efficiently.

Recently we have been involved in vetting DVD material for Marriage Preparation and pastoral work. We will be visiting all youth organisations of the church to listen to any concerns. This used to be the elders' responsibility. We would like to have a series of meetings for young parents to enable them to share their experiences and problems in today's world. It will be our intention to support the Leadership Training taking place in the coming months.

The team who plan our work are Eleanor Mands the official Safeguarding Coordinator, Mairi Duncan, Gaynor Scott, Fiona Cargill, Sharon Hamilton (new member), David Searle, Pat Mill our link person from the Leadership Group and Lorna Searle. We are a varied group, all busy people with different gifts and

St Andrew's Church Structure



strengths. Because our remit is nurture we have to liaise with Martin and understand his thinking on future developments.

As a group we get on well together, pooling our ideas. We hope that if we approach any of you in our nurturing role you will be happy to cooperate with us to enable us to help equip our congregation to better fulfil our God given task of witness in the world.
Lorna Searle

Clerk's Corner

Nomination Committee

In St Andrew's we are quite used to being presented with opportunities for service. These usually are within the congregation or in our local community. Here now is an opportunity to use your talents in the wider work of the Church of Scotland. The Nomination Committee is seeking to identify ministers, deacons, elders and members whose skills and experience might be of particular use to a given area of work within the Councils and Standing Committees. There are 21 of these ranging over such subjects as Church and Society, Social Care, Ecumenical Relations, World

Mission, Stewardship and Finance and The Iona Community. If you would be interested in this kind of work and would like to see the complete list of committees, we would like to hear from you. The list is available in the office. Nominations have to be submitted by the end of November so if you are interested we need a response very soon.

If One Suffers

The above is the title of a report from the World Mission Council's Report concerning Christians living in a minority situation. We are being encouraged to consider how to raise awareness, offer prayer support or take practical action on behalf of minority Christians. A copy of the report is in the office and is available for anyone to borrow.

Lord, how could you do this to me?

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none came. Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood.

But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened; all he'd had was lost. He was stunned with grief and anger. "Lord, how could you do

this to me!"

Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. "How did you know I was here?" asked the weary man of his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal" they replied.

It is easy to get discouraged when things are going bad - but don't lose heart, because God is at work. Remember, next time your little hut is burning to the ground, it just may be a smoke signal sent by the grace of God.



Our First Anniversary!

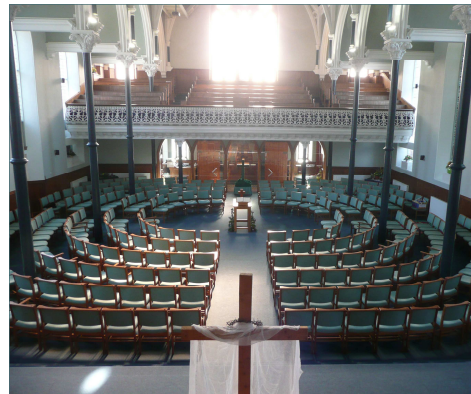
With our communion service on 31st October, we celebrated the first anniversary of the return to our church – how time flies! Perhaps some of us are, by now, thoroughly familiar with our new surroundings but, even though I am in them virtually every day in life, I still find myself thinking; Wow! Isn't this great! When visitors come, for baptisms, for example, invariably they take time to tell us how

Friday evening and open day on the Saturday, with the dedication service on the Sunday morning and Superhero concert at night. I can still picture the procession into the church on that Sunday morning, with representatives from the congregation bringing with them the Bible, a cross, bread and wine and various others of the great symbols of our faith.

Or what about the evening of

congregation – young and old – gathered together, with the seats arranged in circular fashion. I remember the panic I was feeling at about ten minutes before the service was due to commence as we struggled to find seats for everyone who was streaming into the sanctuary!! Still, in my mind, our aim is to generate that kind of interest EVERY week.

But just as much as looking back –



much they appreciate our buildings. Isn't it great to be able to direct people towards the toilets without having to apologise in advance!!

As I reflect on this past year, I'm struck by how quickly its gone in and by the number of special occasions that we shared together.

There was the official opening weekend, with a reception on the

Ruth's Ordination and Introduction to the position of Assistant Minister of St. Andrew's. What a privilege it was for us to host that special evening for Ruth. The downside of remembering that occasion is the realization that, of course, she's no longer with us and of how much I miss having her around.

Then there was our Communion service on Easter Sunday. The whole

and thanking God for every blessing we've known – I find myself looking ahead, as I've alluded to in some of the above, and dreaming dreams of what might be. I do believe that in following in the footsteps of Jesus what is to come can always be more exciting than what has been. I can't wait to find out!

Martin

