



Brechin Bulletin

Scottish Episcopal Church, Diocese of Brechin Newsletter.

July/August 2009, No. 33

Victims of Violence

Among the many matters dealt with by the General Synod last month was a motion that the Scottish Episcopal Church should 'engage with the work of the inter-Anglican Women's Network' and '[undertake] a '...gender audit' of its own.

Prompted by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, these references are a stark reminder of the terrible violence done to many women in different parts of the world. At first glance, however, this can easily look like a do-gooding, politically correct nonsense.

It is I am afraid, not so. Some years ago, the rector in my Peterborough charges invited me to sit down with him and plan a 'wedding preparation day' for more than 40 young couples—many from a local council estate. I had designed an original 'his and hers' analysis of wider relationships. They had statements to read, boxes to tick, and results to share. During the course of filling in the questions there was much joking, and laughter, only once do I recall anger or tears. One couple, as a result, cancelled their wedding, but they wrote to thank us for the day—it had made them think!

But later, after many successful events we got bolder. In the course of sharpening and updating the questionnaire, the rector came to me with the suggestion for a new statement for grooms. It would read: 'It's OK to slap my wife around occasionally'. 'You're joking' I cried, 'You can't put that in!' Quite rightly the rector insisted, and we ended up with some of the most fascinating discussions I have ever heard—with several couples admitting to violence in hidden family settings. Some women can be betrayed and treated violently by those closest to them. In some parts of the world local cultures treat women in a way that fills us with unimaginable horror and which we simply do not deem acceptable. Just a few days ago, the CO of RAF Leuchars told visitors of a single act of courage he had witnessed in Afghanistan: it wasn't of a soldier or airman, but of a girl, on her way to school who was attacked and had acid thrown directly in her face. Her courage? She went straight back to school next day.

Such women are often voiceless and the United Nations Commission may be all some have to alert the rest of the world to what goes on behind closed doors.

For our part, we cannot pretend that the Bible is not sometimes deeply misogynistic and patriarchal, but in the Gospels women have a place of prominence—especially in telling about the resurrection first.

If the sexes are to be treated equally, it isn't just about equal opportunities, equal pay and conditions, it is about being aware that we are all part of one humanity, and that in some places inequality is not only rife, but deliberately built into the very structures of society.

So why an audit of women in the SEC? It's easy to scoff at this—but are they given a fair opportunity in ministry and administration, are we doing our best to ensure they are well represented? The truth is we hope they are, but the facts might be different. It's about being sure. We're never complacent.

- Bishop John

BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY

We would all like to see more people in our churches - could you invite just one person on Sunday, 27th September, 2009 and make a difference all round?

On September 27th half a million people will be inviting someone special back to church with them. 'Back to Church Sunday' began in Manchester in 2004, spread to Wakefield Diocese in 2005, 9 Dioceses in 2006, 20 in 2007 and 38 in 2008, when an estimated 37,000 people came back. This idea has now spread up and down the country and across continents. Many Scottish churches are getting involved this year, including our own. Eight churches in the Diocese have signed up so far.

The Rt. Revd. Jonathan Gledhill, Bishop of Lichfield commented, "**The impact of Back to Church Sunday is not just measured in statistics; it is measured by the wonderful impact it has had on numerous individual lives.**"

If your church hasn't signed up yet and you would like to know more please contact:

Rev. Canon Fay Lamont, Diocesan Mission Officer. Tel. 01382-453818.

From the Bishop's Desk

July, 2009

- 3 College of Bishops, Edinburgh. 10.30am.
- 5 St. John the Baptist, Dundee. 10.15am.
- 8 TISEC Summer School.
- 9 TISEC Summer School.
- 11 TISEC Summer School.
- 12 St. Margaret, Dundee. 11am. St. Drostan, Tarfside. 3pm.
- 14 College of Bishops, Oban.
- 15 MOD visit, Edinburgh.
- 16 Business meeting in office.
- 19 The Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Dundee. 11am.
- 21 CME Day at Edzell. 9.30am.
- 23 St. Margaret's Home Trust Meeting. 9.30am.
- 26 St. John the Baptist, Dundee. 10.15am.
- 27-31 Study Retreat.

August, 2009

- 2 The Cathedral Church of St. Paul. 11am.
 - 9 St. Margaret, Dundee. 11am.
 - 10-15 Study Retreat.
 - 16 The Cathedral Church of St. Paul. 11am.
- During parts of August +John will be on retreat and study leave.

July & August Meetings

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|-----------|---------|----------------------------|
| 16th July | 9.30am | Business meeting. |
| 4th Aug. | 6.00pm | Administration Board. |
| 19th | 2.00pm | DBAC. |
| 20th | 10.30am | Chapter Meeting, Arbroath. |

Deadline—16th of each month.

Please send news to

office@brechin.anglican.org

Scottish Charity No. SCO 16813

READERS - NATIONAL CONFERENCE MAY 2010

A conference for Readers to meet, discuss and explore what Reader Ministry in the SEC in the 21st Century will look like will be held from the 7th to the 9th of May, 2010 (Friday evening through Sunday afternoon). The event will take place in the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan - and it is expected to cost in the range of £125-150 which includes the conference fees, accommodation and all meals. You are requested to write to **express your interest** in attending this event as the conference can only be a success if there is support from the church. Following your response, further details will be forwarded; information on how to book; and arrangements for payment. The Diocese of Brechin will assist those who wish to attend and request financial aid with one-third payments by applicants, Vestry and the Diocese. If you have not received the notification with the attached form to be completed, it is available from the Bishop's office. Please telephone 01382-562244 to request a copy.

BAG OF HOPE

The "Bag of Hope" is a small, bright yellow bag with these words printed on the front. It contains two younger 'Books of Hope' which are a harmonisation of the 4 Gospels - made relevant for children and young people, and also a copy of 'The word for Today' for the adult that brings them to church, or awaits their return back home. After first putting a handful of sweets in each bag, by giving a child a **Bag of Hope** you are giving them the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

You can order the Bags of Hope and books in any amount - **Free of charge**. A church of 50 households might want to consider having 5 bags per family thus your church would order 250 bags - and the books will automatically be sent to go with that number.

If you don't use them all they should be kept for another event at your church, such as your Christmas Carol Concert or Halloween, as **The Word for Today** only expires on 31st January, 2010 and the **Books of Hope** are undated.

From 1st November we will be taking orders for Bags of Hope to be used at Christmastime. Books of Hope are available for a number of age ranges, up to and including 20 years of age, so be sure to specify which books you would like to receive. You can check out the range on our website: <http://www.bookofhope.co.uk/resources.html>

Please feel free to pass on details of this offer to anyone you think might be interested. We do request that you let us know how this was accepted and the response you received. We ask too that you consider covering the cost for the postage incurred in mailing this offer to you.

Please bear in mind that this project is to provide the church a tangible opportunity to offer Hope to the children and young people of our nation.

Contact details: Carl Finnan, Ministry Field Coordinator.

Mobile: 07966-624886 Home: 01512-930523 Office: 08456-040401

E-mail: cfinnan@ucb.co.uk (United Christian Broadcasters Ltd.)

Web: <http://www.ucb.co.uk> or <http://www.UCB2GO.co.uk>

WELCOME TO

Pastoral Assistant, Richard Cumming has arrived in Dundee to assist the Rev. David Shepherd during the summer holidays. He is staying at St. Margaret's Rectory.

FAREWELL TO

Tom Malcolm, Verger at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul. Tom recently retired. We wish him well in his retirement and are extremely grateful for everything he has done.

The Rev. Andrew Richardson has now left the Diocese and St. Mary Magdalene's Congregation has said its 'farewell'. Andrew has joined the Glasgow Diocese as an inner-city priest. He has enriched our ministry in this Diocese and we will miss him greatly.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

July/August

St. John the Baptist, Dundee

3 **Race Night.** 7pm in the big hall. This is a joint effort between St. John's and Boomerang. More information from Gillian on 01382-455656.

St. Mary the Virgin, Arbroath

25 **Summer Fayre.** Usual stalls. Requests for help and contributions will be made in due course.

August

St. Margaret, Dundee

22 **Coffee Morning.** 10.00am. Usual stalls. All welcome.

2nd Annual Child Protection Conference

Tuesday, 6th October, 2009

Stirling Management Centre, Stirling University

WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

The new **Multi-Agency Resource Service (MARS)**, to be based in Stirling, will be officially launched by the Scottish Government this summer. It will be the **first hub of child protection expertise in the United Kingdom**. Mr. Adam

Ingram MSP, Minister for Children and Early Years, will give the keynote address. Beth Smith the newly appointed **Director of the MARS project**, Jane Scott, **MARS** liaison officer, Scottish Government, Fiona Mitchell, Co-ordinator of the Scottish Child Care and Protection Network and Professor Brigid Daniel, Department of Applied Social Science at Stirling University, are also featured speakers. For further information or to register your interest, please visit the following webpage and navigate to the conference section to find out more about the events:

www.mackayhannah.com