



# HolyTrinity News

Newsletter of Holy Trinity Scottish Episcopal Church, Kilbride Road, Dunoon, Argyll  
[www.holytrinitydunoon.wordpress.com](http://www.holytrinitydunoon.wordpress.com)

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## Welcome

The holidays are almost over, Cowal Games have taken place and the schools are back. I find myself quoting my grandmother who used to say ‘the nights are fair drawing in’. I wonder if many of you, like me, wonder where the summer has gone!

However, one of the good things about the autumn, other than the beautiful colours, is the beginning of all the winter activities. Holy Trinity activities are stepping up a pace too as you can see from What’s Ahead. We certainly cannot say there is nothing to do. We have plenty to keep us busy this autumn - it will be Christmas before we know it!

## Newsletter Costs

A number of you have asked if payment should be made for Holy Trinity News. The Vestry discussed this and decided that as the main purpose was to help communications, the Newsletter should be free. However, if anyone would like to help with costs, there will be a box at the back of the church for donations for the Newsletter Fund.

## Care Packages

Please remember, we are looking for items to send to our young men and women in Afghanistan. There are leaflets in church giving details. If we have enough items, we plan to send some boxes in the next couple of weeks.

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## What’s Ahead

September sees:

- Book Group will meet on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 7.30pm
- Bible Study Meetings
  - Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>, St. Mark’s Gospel (15 Broomfield Drive)
  - Monday 8<sup>th</sup>, Genesis (Rector)
- Homosexuality and the Church – understanding difference Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> at the Rector
- Michaelmas celebrations – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> - See inside

For your diary:

Singing Workshops Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October.

## Rector's Letter



who bring healing, blessing, and the constant reminder that we need not fear. We are in early planning stages, so keep an eye on the pew sheet for more detailed information.

Dear Friends

This month seems to offer us a space for thinking of the diversity of ways that we might respond to God. Maureen has shared her thoughts with us on a pagan wedding ceremony, and I have replaced the usual 'Growing Together' column with a theological reflection on paganism. Why do people so often look for God everywhere but in the church, and find it easier to call on a thousand gods rather than to believe in Christ?

Another question of diversity of responses to God will arise in the middle of the month when we gather to talk about understandings of homosexuality in the church. More information on this is elsewhere in the newsletter.

And finally, the question of diversity opens the door for our Michaelmas celebrations at the end of the month. We don't always make much of Michaelmas, unless we happen to know someone who is being ordained. But it has always been a part of the church's tradition that when we worship, we gather 'with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven', and this year you are invited to take time to think about what that means. I am planning a different sort of worship event, and am hoping to do this at a venue in town, alongside Chris and Michaela Goan from the Emergent Church. This will be a chance to pray, to worship, and to encounter God's messengers

## Michaelmas

*...with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven*

Come to play with the angels.

We will celebrate Michaelmas through art, sound, meditation and prayers for healing.



This will take place on Friday, 26th September at a time and place to be advised.

## Meet Irene Storie



*When did you first come to Holy Trinity?*

I first came to Holy Trinity in 1959.

*Tell us a little about where you were before and what brought you to Dunoon?*

I attended Christ Church, Falkirk and was confirmed at Holy Trinity, Stirling. I attended evensong followed by Youth Fellowship meetings. I was a member of Falkirk Young Farmers' Club. I shared a love of amateur dramatics with my two sisters. I married Stewart at Christ Church and came to Dunoon where my husband and his parents farmed. A change from farming to Storie (Argyll) Limited Civil Engineering Contractors made for an interesting and busy life.

*Apart from Church, how do you spend your time? What are you passionate about?*

I am a Burnsian and have been since primary school and have been invited to speak at various meetings and gatherings over the years. I am a member of Robert Burns World Federation Ltd, and Greenock Burns Club. I enjoy poetry of all kinds and love drama, having been a member of Centenary Players, a local Drama club in the late sixties and early seventies.

The Guiding Movement has always been a strong interest. I was a Guide, Guider and Dunoon District Commissioner. I am now a member of the Trefoil Guild.

Boating is something Stewart and I have been interested in since 1975 and we can often be found sailing somewhere up the West Coast.

Music has always been a passion of mine. I was a member of Cowal Choral Club for 25 years and during that time took part in many shows and concerts. I was a founder member of the reformed Cowal Gaelic Choir and sang with them for 10 years. Most recently I have begun singing with South East Cowal Singers. A tremendous experience in 2005 was taking part in the Verdi Requiem for 1100 singers at the Usher Hall.

*What do you like about Holy Trinity?*

I like the continuity of the place. In my time I have seen 10 Rectors come and go. Each has left something of themselves in Holy Trinity. I also like the welcoming atmosphere of the church.

*What do you do (or have you done) around Holy Trinity?*

*What do you enjoy about it?*

During my time here, I have done numerous jobs. These include Secretary, Treasurer, Lay Rep, Mission Board Member, Ecumenical Representative, member of the choir, reader, welcomer, church cleaner, flower arranger, church fayre convener and many more. As a practical person I have enjoyed using my talents in a practical way.

*What is your favourite hymn and why?*

My favourite hymn is 'By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill' – particularly the old version. This brings back memories of my childhood and always gives me a feeling of peace.

Note from the Editor:

We are grateful for the many items and much work gifted to Holy Trinity by Irene and Stewart over the years including the extension to the graveyard and recently the repair of the driveway.

## A Pagan Wedding

Recently I was invited to my Goddaughter's Pagan wedding (called a Handfasting Ceremony) and the bride and groom's son's naming ceremony. Not only was it a new experience for me but it also raised some ethical dilemmas for us and I thought you might be interested in hearing about it.

I did have to think quite hard as to whether we attended or not. The message I received was 'we would really like to invite you but we are not sure if you would approve and therefore feel able to come'. Neil and I discussed it and agreed it was more important to be with Audrey and Mark than not, even if we had some misgivings. I had, after all, known her since she was born and been close to her throughout her life. I did manage to say to her that I did find it difficult and somewhat incongruous to be attending my Goddaughter's Pagan wedding.

The service took place in Locher Wood between Lochwinnoch and Kilmacollm. A Pagan ceremony is not held in a permanent place. It is usually held out of doors and the area is blessed and consecrated at the time by the High Priestess and High Priest using incense, oil and candles. It is a legal ceremony if one of the Celebrants has been authorised to conduct weddings (as in this case). For the fashion conscious amongst you, the bride wore red and black and the bridegroom a kilt.



We began in a circle with a call to the elements (air, fire, water and earth) to the Goddess (Bridget) and God (Angus Og) and to our Ancestors to join with our witness of the rite. The bride and the groom said vows to each other (which they had

composed) and exchanged rings. Then their hands were bound with three cords, the God cord, the Goddess cord and the Mother Earth cord.

The Baby was blessed by the Elements and named and anointed with holy oil in the name of Danu and Beli. His parents, Goddess Mother and God Father promised to support him.

We stood round the circle and shared a sacred meal of consecrated bread and mead, wishing that the couple would never hunger nor thirst in their married life together. An Apache Wedding Blessing followed. We said farewell to the elements, the God and Goddess and the Ancestors. The words of the closing of the Druid Circle were said and the ceremony was ended.

In the end I found it fine, not really much different from a registry office wedding with no reference to God. What I did find difficult was calling to a God and Goddess, even if in my heart I did not believe them to be so. I had thought Christianity might have derived from this, but I ended thinking the ceremony had taken parts of our rites and some Celtic Christianity and adapted them.

Maureen McKellar

### Theological Reflection on a Pagan Wedding

*For this is the thing the priests do not know, with their One God and One Truth: that there is no such thing as a true tale. Truth has many faces, and truth is like the old road to Avalon; it depends on your own will, and your own thought, whither the road will take you, and whether, at the end, you arrive in the Holy Isle of Eternity, or among the priests with their bells and their death and their Satan and Hell and damnation... but perhaps I am unjust even to them. Even the Lady of the Lake, who hated a priest's robe as she would have hated a poisonous viper... once chide me for speaking evil of their God,*

*"For all the Gods are one God," she said... "and all the Goddesses are one Goddess, and there is only one Initiator."*

Marion Zimmer Bradley,  
**The Mists of Avalon**

(continued...)

(continued...)

No, don't worry. It's not a new creed. And I'm not offering it as truth, but to give perspective. When I first read **The Mists of Avalon**, in my teenage not-Christian, not-Not-Christian days, I remember reading those words and thinking that they were true - not everything in the book of course. I knew we were in the realms of legend and political interpretation and story telling. But somehow, there was truth here: that God is bigger than the ways we limit God; that images of God can work for good or ill; that we can live our way into eternity or to an all too real sense of hell by the truths we choose to live by.

So, when Maureen spoke of her concerns about going to a pagan wedding, I was probably more relaxed about it than she was. I've known any number of people who calls themselves wiccan or pagan, and generally they are peaceful, reverent and curious souls who are disillusioned with what they think Christianity is about, and who go seeking elsewhere. That is not always the case, of course: I have also met pagans, witches, druids who abused faith to increase their own power. But I don't suppose there has ever been a religion in the world that someone did not abuse.

I see a lot of the desire for alternate forms of spirituality as a misplaced seeking for God. And I think that some of the misplacement is our fault – the fault of the church, that too often and without realising it projected an image of God that was bound up with guilt and punishment and rigid power structures, and forgot to show people a God of love who rejoices in all creation. So, does that mean that we leave the pagans to their alternate seeking, say it's all OK? No. But I think we need to listen to them before we can hope to turn their hearts back to God. We need to see what sort of god they have been drawn to before we can speak the truth of Christ in a way that they will be able to receive.

So what's going on in this pagan wedding? We have a couple who want to affirm that there is something sacred happening when two people who love each other make vows to share the whole of their lives and be faithful. We have a couple who

want to see their love in context of something bigger: the beauty of creation, the power of nature, the 'will of the gods'. And we have a couple who want to have a blessing named not only for themselves, but for their child: so that all heaven and earth are called on to protect and bless this little boy. There is nothing there that cannot be held in a Christian context, though there is much that may need to be transformed and redeemed in Christ.

What struck me on reading the order of service was how desperately they were trying to do something that was coherent. But to my eyes, it simply failed. Call on Bridget, if you must (Bridget, whom the Church re-Christened as St Bride) but know that to do so puts you in a particular story, a certain tradition which does not then lead to Beli (an ancient Nordic god) or to the Apache Indians.

Should a Christian find it problematic to go to a pagan wedding and be asked to 'hail and welcome' a host of named gods and goddesses. Yes, probably. But I think we should find it more problematic that there are so many people – good people, who genuinely want to live their lives in relation to God – who would never dream of looking for God in a church, nor expect Christians have anything to teach them of the sacredness of life. And we need to ask ourselves: how could we convince them if they did? What do our lives say about the kind of God we believe in? How can we show people that it is truly worth turning to Christ?

KB



## From the Counting House

There are no excitements to report this month. We are a little worried about the cost escalation of the heating. We are looking at this and I hope to get advice from those who understand timers and switches and other serious matters.

Please remember to keep filling your flower pots – they gave us a good boost this year.

The year end accounts are looming, so it would help us if we could settle any outstandings this month.

Richard, Treasurer

## The Organist Writes

Kimberly and I are keen to introduce, on an occasional basis, the singing of a psalm. To that end, I propose to run two workshops, on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October, beginning at 5pm and lasting for about an hour.

At the same time as getting to grips with the psalms, we'll also look at a selection of new and attractive hymns, which will be sung on Sundays during the year.

I do hope you'll want to join me for a good sing and help introduce fresh material into our worship.

John, Organist

## Book Group

The book to be discussed at the next Book Group meeting is called 'Children of the Dead End' by Patrick McGill. It is based on personal memories of the author's life in Ireland and Scotland during the early 1900s. The meeting will be held at Graham and Pauline's house at Clachaig, Glen Lean on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 7:30pm.

The Book Group is very informal. If you haven't tried it, do come along. If you need transport, just ask.

## Comments and Clippings

We send our condolences to Dennis Robson at the sad, untimely death of his son-in-law John. We remember Dennis and his daughter Christine in our prayers.

Some of you may have met Bishop Mdimi's wife Irene in July. Unfortunately she had to leave Lambeth unexpectedly just after she arrived to return home to Australia as their son was ill. Our prayers go with them.

## Bible Study of St Mark

Why study the gospels? Not only can we learn about the past or gain spiritual uplift, but we learn how to live for Christ now, how to be part of Christ's work in the world.

Come and enjoy a new approach to reading St. Mark's Gospel, where by studying the text we look for connections with our own situations and think about what God is calling us to do here and now. The meetings will take place at 7.30pm Wednesdays for 6 weeks beginning Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at Catherine Webber's house, 15 Broomfield Drive Dunoon (Telephone: 704348)

## Homosexuality and the Church

Saturday 13 September, 10 am coffee. 10.15 am – 12.15 pm conversation in the Rectory.

This is a chance for us to learn together and to share our thoughts on how the church does and should relate to gay people. The first goal will be to try to understand why Christians hold different beliefs about homosexuality. The conversation will then adapt to the needs of the group.

## The Wider Church

A central tenet of the Lambeth Conference this year was indaba – based on an African ideal of purposeful discussion on the common concerns of our shared life.

The following is taken from Bishop Martin's reflection in his indaba group:

'In the indaba in which I was placed, there were bishops from Sudan, Ghana, Gambia and South Africa, North and South India, the Philippines, Canada, the United States, England and, yes, me, - Scotland. When the indaba addressed the issue of poverty, there was a depth of nervousness and sensitivity - not surprisingly, given the massive economic imbalance between the different countries represented.

'Now I ask you to remember that this is my reflection and is not therefore representative. I can only illustrate the depth of importance in indaba in an exchange I had with a Bishop from Central Sudan. He had been separated from his wife for over 6 years because of the various conflicts in Sudan. He did not know during that time whether she was alive or dead. They are re-united now and both were at the conference – tall, dignified, quiet and direct in their Christian expression.

'I asked him in the indaba if I would be able to live for just one month the same daily life-style as he does. 'No' was his reply without hesitation., 'Nor am I asking you to, Martin. I am asking you to look and listen to us and you will see that Christ is on the ground with us.' This image of 'Christ being on the ground with us' is perhaps the most important gift I received in the Lambeth Conference.

'I pursued the matter with him, however. He has a cup of tea in the early morning and one meal a day which occasionally includes protein. 'Martin, you would not survive psychologically because you would have chosen to live as such.' Of course, the Sudanese bishop and, by extension countless others, do survive psychologically perhaps because

they have to! How can you possibly debate and argue with such an experience.'

Taken from Bishop Martin's blog:

<http://followcolumba.blogspot.com>

The editor has printed copies of the Lambeth Indaba reflections, the sermons from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Martin's reflections if anyone would like to read them.

## The Vestry Report

The Vestry met on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August. We celebrated the Eucharist together in the Rectory before attending to the business matters.

We had first thoughts from the Focus Group who have been discussing ideas on what we should do at Holy Trinity for individuals. At the previous meeting the Vestry heard the first ideas from the Focus Group looking at how we better serve the Community. Both groups are now looking to put together some fuller proposals for the Vestry to consider. (Any ideas from the congregation will be welcomed by the appropriate groups). The Group looking at what we should do for our community (including looking at the buildings) is researching further for their next meeting.

We had an update from the Treasurer on the financial position to date and briefly discussed a letter from the Diocese on the use of the facilities at Cumbrae and Iona. The meeting closed with the Grace.

## Points to Ponder

You are writing a Gospel,  
A chapter a day,  
By the deeds that you do  
And the words that you say.

Others read what you write,  
Whether faithless or true.  
What is the Gospel according to you?

author contested, possibly  
Richard Johnson

## Notable dates - September

Wed 3	Bible Study St. Mark 7.00pm 15 Broomfield Drive, Dunoon
<b>Sun 7 – Trinity 16</b>	
Mon 8	Bible Study Genesis 7.00pm Rectory
Wed 10	Bible Study St. Mark (2)
Sat 13	Discussion - Homosexuality and the Church 10-12.15 Rectory
<b>Sun 14 - Trinity 17</b> Lay Team	
Mon 15	Vestry Meeting 7.30
Wed 17	Bible Study St. Mark (3)
Thurs 18	Lay Team/Preachers' training 11.00am Rectory
<b>Sun 21 - Trinity 18</b>	
Mon 22	Bible Study Genesis
Wed 24	Bible Study St. Mark (4)
Fri 26	Michaelmas Celebrations
<b>Sun 28 – Michaelmas</b>	
<b>September Readings</b>	
Trinity 16	Exodus 12.1-14 Romans 13.8-14 Matthew 18.15-20
Trinity 17	Exodus 14. 19-31 Romans 14.1-12 Matthew 18.21-35
Trinity 18	Exodus 16.2-15 Philippians 1.21-30 Matthew 20.1-16
Michaelmas	Genesis 28.10-17 Hebrews 1.5-14 John 1. 47-51

## Church Contacts

Name	Contact
Rector	Rev. Kimberly Bohan (702444)
People's Warden	Mac McLean (705497)
Rector's Warden	Pauline Revill (704731)
Lay Representative	Ann Narraway (830400)
Vestry Secretary	Di Tennent (840779)
Vestry Treasurer	Richard McGilvray (830116)
Organist	John McIntosh (703304)
Book Group	Di Tennent
House Groups	Rector
Mission to Seafarers	Pauline Revill
Christian Aid	Brian and Margaret Dineley (870073)
Bible study	Rector
Coffee Rota	Pauline Revill
Flower Arranging	Sharon Barnard (706240)
Worship Rotas	Margaret Dineley
Newsletter	Maureen McKellar (703058)

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