

**ST TERNAN'S SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL
CHURCH MUCHALLS**

MAGAZINE

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JOINT MEETING OF VESTRIES WITH REV CAPT KERRY DIXON – 26 January 2018

The meeting was held in the Community Education Centre, Anne Street, Stonehaven. It was attended for all or part of the time by 15 members of the Joint Vestries. It was led by Rev Capt Kerry Dixon, Rector of St Luke's Dundee and Diocesan Mission Officer.

Purpose of meeting

The purpose of the meet was to open discussion with the two Vestries as to their interest in and support for working with Kerry in developing a mission plan for either or both of the two churches. Kerry outlined his extensive experience in mission activities in the church, including more than 25 years as an officer in the Church Army. Following his appointment to St Luke's, he has led the congregation from a regular membership of five to a regular congregation of 40+, by introducing the concept of café church and in simplifying the liturgies used to language that is more universally understood and by working closely with some of the most disadvantaged members of society.

Kerry encouraged the meeting to try to put the needs and aspirations of St James' and St Ternan's into the wider context of the diocese. His aim here was to demonstrate the constraints within which the diocese is working, in terms of priestly and lay reader resources, finance and the impositions imposed on congregations by the costs of maintenance of fabric. He did this by a short quiz, which is set out below:

How many full-time priests are there in the diocese? -

Just 5 full-timers, one each at the Cathedral, St Mary Magdalene and St Ninian's Dundee, together with Laurencekirk and Arbroath with Auchmithie.

In addition, there are

3 priests at 75% full time equivalent (including the Dean)

1 at 50% fte

2 at 25% fte

This is equivalent to 8 full-time priests, or 3 charges per priest. Some of these clergy are on short-term appointments, or continuation of their appointments is contingent on continued funding. Since all stipends are paid by the charges they serve, as the next 2 or 3 priests retire/leave, it is unlikely there will be funding for more than one by way of replacement.

These figures illustrate just how tight the diocese is for clergy, and why new models of ministry must be developed if the church is to survive in the diocese.

How many lay readers are there?

Nine active out of a total of 13. Most of those who are no longer active have had to retire because of failing health.

How many charges are there in the diocese?

28, of which a number are joint charges

What is the average total weekly attendance across all churches in the diocese?

599 people, with the two churches with the highest regular attendance being the Cathedral and St Mary Magdalene

What is the average weekly attendance per charge?

24 people

What is the average weekly attendance per charge after taking out the two largest congregations?

17 people.

What is the average age of the congregations?

70+. In 20 – 25% of congregations, the average is over 80 (an age which is slightly above the average life span for people in Scotland). Much of the church's income is from members of the congregations; so, on the basis of natural attrition, income will inevitably drop over the next 3 – 5 years.

How much per day would each congregational member have to give to cover the running costs of the diocese?

The total budget for running the diocese in 2016 was £255,825, including bishop's stipend, house, office, diocesan administrator, etc. This is equivalent to £10,233 per charge, or £427 per member per annum /£1.17 per member per day.

Note: this question relates solely to diocesan costs It does not include the costs of running the individual congregations.

If each charge is to cover its own costs, including stipends, buildings, quota to diocese, etc, this is estimated as equivalent to £3545 per member per annum, or £9.74 per day.

Moving forward

Kerry explained that he had introduced these statistics to help members of the joint Vestries to have a realistic understanding of the current situation. Change is coming. It must come.

The church is potentially in steep decline. It is no more than 3 – 5 years away from the cliff edge. Whether it is in its death throes or whether there is a more optimistic opportunity around the corner, we can't tell. But two things are clear: without new people who can engage with mission, we are heading to the more pessimistic outcome; even if we attract new people we need to change the way in which our churches are run. The traditional priest-led model of church is no longer an option. We have a short-term window of opportunity, during which we need to converge church with a more business-like way of operating. But Kerry is still hopeful that God will help us turn things around.

The diocesan strategy

At diocesan synod 2017, a new diocesan strategy was approved in principle, based on the concept of mission hubs. It was noted that it had been agreed the +Nigel and Kerry would conduct a road show to introduce this principle to congregations, but that +Nigel's retirement had set that intention back. It was noted that a diocesan statement of aims had been prepared, setting out the way in which the concept of mission hubs might be introduced across the diocese, but that this document had not been widely distributed. Only one Vestry member present had a personal copy. In this situation, Kerry gave a brief overview of the concept of mission hubs and left a more detailed discussion to a subsequent meeting after people had had time to read the statement, a copy of which is now attached as the last

page of this note. There is no reason why the statement could not be made more widely available if congregations want to discuss mission hubs.

Kerry was keen to stress that the introduction of mission hubs was not intended to impose a diocesan-wide model of 'church' on individual congregations. It was rather a means of providing a focus on mission. The unifying factor behind the statement is our dependency on God, a focus on those who do not come to church, and our generosity and service, coupled with our shared enthusiasm for worship. To achieve the aim of the strategy, the diocese is committing itself to the following five goals:

- A focus on mission and becoming effective in mission
- That 25% of worshippers will be aged between 13 and 24
- The church will be fully resourced both in ministry and administration
- Our church property and resources are rationalised
- Every congregation commits themselves to Jesus and actively lives out their faith in the local community. It was noted that in the north of the diocese, the opportunities for creating or being part of a hub were constrained by geography and distance.

What is a mission hub?

A hub is perceived as both geographical area and the charges within it working collaboratively. Through the decision taken by diocesan synod 2017, charges will be encouraged to participate in developing a mission plan for the hub they are part of, sharing in ideas and resources to accomplish the goals. In order to remind members of St James' Vestry and to assist members of St Ternan's Vestry, the following paragraph is repeated from Peter Sharp's Lay Rep's report to the St James' AGM 2017, and published in their Newsletter for December 2017/January 2018:

"Mission is central to the new strategy that the diocese is developing. One can be cynical about diocesan strategies, I have been involved in at least three of them, and the retirement of Bishop Nigel has not helped with this latest one. However, there is a willingness at diocesan level to make this one a success. Not least because the diocese is facing many challenges in sustaining ministry with the current model of charges led by a full-time rector. The future must lie in more collaboration between charges based around mission and more lay-led ministry, while at the same time accepting that the Eucharist is a central to the Episcopal Church."

In discussion, the point was made that congregations would need to have support to engage in mission. To put it succinctly, many congregations are (as noted in the quiz) of advanced years and 'worn out'; they don't feel able to work towards mission without support. In order to collaborate, we need to have faith in ourselves. But there are a lot of strengths around the place, and we need to find mechanisms to share in success. Perhaps, it was suggested, Grapevine could be used to publicise success stories, what's worked and what hasn't worked.

The charges within a hub must be able to get on together and have a desire to work together. The benefits of a hub need to be identified and accepted – not just a case of finding sufficient money to pay towards a clergy person.

The challenges of clergy recruitment were discussed: geography, availability of suitable housing, the fact that the training and formation of clergy tends more to reflect the concept of church of the mid-20th century, rather than the needs of the mid-21st century. It is doubtful whether many clergy have had training in the current challenges of priesthood: enabling people to grow; the ability to adapt to new

circumstances; proclaiming and living their own faith; providing leadership, getting people excited and bringing life to the church.

God is working in and outside the church and a lot of people are working hard to keep faith alive.

The question was posed, what did Jesus intend? The church has never stood still. Change only comes with a struggle but we need proactively to think about the future. There is a view that people are not put off from church on a Sunday, but what church offers. Current approaches cannot be allowed to put people off church.

The tools we have used to grow church in the past no longer work. Our offering is no longer what many people want. Christian youth work has collapsed. Many people want to belong, to be part of a community, but this is a longer-term process. It now tends to take 2 to 3 years before they a person is willing to 'sign up' to membership. Currently 100% of growth tends to be from Episcopalians returning to church.

Kerry based his comments on his experiences at St Luke's and elsewhere. Non-churched people respond slowly. As he introduced café church, the intention is to feed people before the service, make people feel comfortable and welcome. He rewrote the liturgy into plain English, very reverent, Catholic in approach to Eucharist, then fringe activities. We need to make it easy for people to 'come in'. Kerry runs café church not because he prefers the approach, but to meet a need locally.

Next steps

In conclusion, it was agreed that the Vestries needed to reflect on the session today and then to decide whether, jointly or singly, they wished to work with Kerry on the next steps to becoming part of a mission hub.

Peter Smart

So you think English is easy?

Read on:

- 1) The bandage was wound around the wound.
- 2) The farm was used to produce produce.
- 3) We must polish the Polish furniture.
- 4) The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- 5) Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
- 6) A sea bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- 7) The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- 8) They were too close to the door to close it.
- 9) After going out after having done some sewing, a sewer fell into a sewer.
- 10) Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.



God So Loved the World *Revd. Paul Hardingham, Rector of Bolton*

'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16)

This verse has been described as *'the greatest verse in the Bible'*, as it enables us to understand the events of Good Friday and Easter Day. The cross and resurrection reveal the depth of God's love for each of us.

God's love is unconditional: God demonstrated the extent of his love by sending His Son into this world, to show us what it looks like: *'God with skin on'*! God graciously loves us, as none of us deserves it. *'There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. There is nothing we can do to make God love us less.'* (Philip Yancey).

God's love is sacrificial: The cross is the supreme demonstration of God's love, as Jesus identifies with a fallen, suffering world. He died for our sins, removing the barrier between us and God, giving access into God's presence and release from the power of sin and death.

God's love is accessible: Jesus' resurrection makes His eternal life available to all who put their trust in Him. It's an offer of life with purpose, in which we can know God personally, both now and for eternity.

Bobby Moore described receiving the World Cup from the Queen in 1966 as terrifying: *'I noticed that the Queen was wearing some beautiful white gloves. I looked down at my hands and they were completely covered with mud'*! Although we approach God with dirty and spoilt lives, by the cross and resurrection, we can shake hands with a holy God. He offers us *'life in all its fullness'*, with healing, forgiveness, peace and a fresh start in life!



Personal Viewpoint from Peter Nelson

HOW MUCH SHOULD I BE GIVING TO OUR CHURCH – DRIVING TO SUCCESS!?

Recent figures given to Clergy indicate that to run the Diocese, using the 2016 figures, each church member in the diocese needs to contribute £1.17 per day, which rounds up to £430 per year each. The Diocese receives this by quota contributions from each Church. In addition, each church also needs funds to maintain its very existence.

For St Ternan's, Muchalls, the average expenditure over the last 5 years as shown on the Charity Regulator's website, works out to be £25,907, which divided by the 56 members shown on the 2016 Diocesan Report of 2016, rounds to £460 per member.

Therefore, St Ternan's needs on average £430 + £460 = £890 per member per year!

Which is £74 each per month, on average.

A common problem in many churches appears to be how to indicate to members how much each member should be giving.

It is suggested that the following "MOTORING LIFESTYLE" indicator could be a useful indicator to EACH church going member of the household of what they could contribute:

INCOME	MOTORING LIFESTYLE	CONTRIBUTION
Social benefits only	No car, public transport	-20% average = £59 month
Income + Social Benefits	No car, public transport	-10% average = £66 month
Earned income or private pension	No car	Average= £74 month
Earned income or private pension	1 car/ household (ordinary make)	+10% Av= £81 month
Earned income or private pension	1 car/ household (Luxury make)	+15% Av= £85 month
Earned income or private pension	2cars/household (ordinary makes)	+20% Av= £88 month
Earned income or private pension	2cars/household (Luxury makes)	+25% Av= £93 month

Off course if these contributions are gift aided, they are worth 25% extra to the church!
(Noting also that households having two luxury cars are very likely to be higher rate taxpayers and can reclaim some income Tax!)

The above is just one way of considering your lifestyle versus church giving, have you considered number and location of holidays, how many properties you use, etc. in relation to how you value your contribution to the Church??



What now?

Today, I was in the bathroom at a popular coffee chain. Someone had written "What Would Jesus Do?" on the wall. Another person had added, directly underneath: "Wash His hands." Then a third person wrote, "And your feet."

The legacy of mothers in the Bible Norma Murrain

'Who can find a virtuous woman, her worth is far above rubies.' Prov.31:10

With Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day fast approaching, we are reminded of the joy and responsibility of being mothers. The legacy that mothers leave is written on the hearts of their children, and so passed down the generations. There are many mothers mentioned in the Bible; here are just four.

Eve Genesis tells us that Eve was created by God (Yahweh) by taking a rib from Adam. Eve was the Mother of all creation, the very first wife and mother mentioned in the Bible. She was inquisitive, with a hunger for knowledge, but tragically succumbed to the serpent's temptation to eat the forbidden fruit, and to even share it with Adam. As the mother of Cain, who killed his brother Abel, Eve was the first woman to ever experience the loss of a child. The lesson from Eve is that 'the wages of sin' really *is* death' and that disobeying God's laws only leads to sorrow and loss.

Hannah Hannah was the mother of the great prophet Samuel (see 1st Samuel). Hannah had been infertile, so at the temple she prayed in desperation, that if God gave her a son, she would give him up to become a priest. Hannah was blessed with Samuel, and when he was weaned (around three years old), Hannah gave him to Eli, to be raised as a priest. Hannah went on to have five more children. Hannah reminds us of the importance of persistence in prayer, and of how richly God can answer our prayers.

Ruth The book of Ruth tells of how Ruth, a Moabite woman, chose to turn to the God of the Israelites. Ruth told Naomi, her Israelite mother-in-law: "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. .." She went on to marry Boaz and her son Obed became the father of Jesse, who was the father of David... an ancestor of Jesus. Ruth reminds us that our backgrounds need not affect our own choices in life, and that fidelity and faithfulness will be blessed.

Mary Mary was a virgin who conceived her Son by the Holy Spirit. The miraculous birth took place when she was betrothed to Joseph, and had accompanied him to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. Mary's life stands for purity, faithfulness and wisdom. She reminds us of the importance of obedience and willing surrender to God's will, however inconvenient it may sometimes be for us. Mary had her priorities right: 'I am the Lord's servant' (Luke 1:38) and 'let it be to me according to your Word' (Luke 1:34).

This month, let's give thanks for all the good mothers everywhere, whose faith, love, kindness and prayers for their children are leaving behind a legacy of goodness and grace.



The unexpected effect of celebrity vicars

Celebrity clergy such as the Revd Richard Coles and the Revd Kate Bottley have helped the Church of England, by making it appear more accessible, and thereby boosting the number of trainee clergy up to a ten-year high.

Such is the belief of a number of church leaders, such as the Bishop of Repton, the Rt Rev Jan McFarlane. 'With Richard and Kate being on *Strictly Come Dancing* and shows like that, they've just come across as human people who happen to have a strong faith.'

And so, while in 2016 there were 476 new trainees; last year there were 544 new trainees. New priests are also getting younger; last year 28 per cent of trainees were under 32.

SPRING IS ON ITS WAY – Peter Smart

I'm lucky to live where I do. We can see fields on three sides. We have the 'auld scots pines', after which our house is named, running beside the house down the lane. We can see the most phenomenal sunsets from the back of the house, and the southern edge of the Grampians and the Cathertuns from various windows, back and front.

Just now, there is the vestige of snow on the high tops, but elsewhere there are signs of spring all around. The snowdrops, the harbinger of spring, are well out and the crocuses in the lawn are beginning to show a purple haze. The witch hazel across from the kitchen has the most glorious crop of yellow catkin-like flowers and the yellow flowers of the cowslips (which have actually taken it on themselves to bloom all year!) are visible too.

This morning I saw a deer grazing in the stubble field. The rooks are gathering twigs for their nests. The male black birds are fighting to delineate their territories – vicious little beasts with each other at this time of year! Yesterday, Margaret saw two wood peckers chasing each other round and round one of the scots pines. The bird life is abundant, from the wren that nests in the honeysuckle to the buzzard that swoops overhead. Walking the dog through the Fettercairn estate I have seen red squirrels and red kites. Spring most definitely is on its way.

I **am** lucky to live where I do. But aren't we all lucky to live where we do – whether in the town or the countryside? After all, each one of us has a roof over our heads, clean water from the tap, clean air to breathe, abundant food on the shelves of the supermarkets – and no doubt on the shelves in our kitchens, too. We have much to thank God for.

None of us, I pray, is a 'one in eleven' of the world's population that goes to bed hungry each night – but there may well be some 'one in elevens' close by, even in the apparently affluent environs of Stonehaven or Muchalls or Newtonhill. The demand on food banks is growing in Aberdeenshire. There is evidence that children from low income families are going hungry from Friday to Monday – may be not just here, but in other parts of Scotland.

We **are** lucky to live where we do. We **do** have much to thank God for. So, what might we do by way of our Christian witness to help those less fortunate than we are? We may be able to drop a few items at one of the collecting points for the local food bank (don't forget that there is a basket by the door at St James' every Sunday!) Lent for some is a time for sacrificial giving. Even a pound or two to an appropriate charity will help. There are churches that host job clubs, poverty

counselling and teaching people how to make a decent meal cheaply. We may not have the resources, the money, the skills or the time, to help in any of these ways. But the least we can do is pray, to say 'thank you' to God for what we have and enjoy. And we can pray fervently for those who are less well off than we are. For there is universal evidence from through the ages that the Lord hears our prayers. Let's add ours to the prayers of all who pray. Amen



What the teacher says and what the teacher means....

If you have ever wondered what the teachers really think of your child, you may enjoy these snippets from real reports....and the thought behind them!

James has a remarkable ability in gathering needed information from his classmates. *(He was caught cheating on an exam.)*

Karen is an endless fund of energy and viability. *(Your hyperactive monster can't stay put for five minutes.)*

Fantastic imagination! *(He's one of the biggest liars I have ever met.)*

Margie exhibits a relaxed attitude to school, indicating that high expectations don't intimidate her. *(The lazy thing hasn't done one assignment all term.)*

Sue is a real athlete, with superior hand-eye coordination. *(The little creep stung me with a rubber band from 15 feet away.)*

Nick thrives on interaction with his peers. *(Your son never shuts up.)*

Nancy's greatest asset is demonstrative public discussions. *(Every time I give an assignment, she responds by sparking a classroom argument over it.)*

John enjoys the thrill of engaging challenges with his peers. *(He's an incorrigible bully.)*

Jane is an adventurous nature lover, who rarely misses opportunities to explore new territory. *(Your daughter skipped class and nearly drowned trying to catch wriggly things in the school pond.)*

Summary of Minutes of Vestry Meeting on Friday, 12th January 2018

New Vestry: Irene welcomed Russ on to Vestry. Irene asked Vestry members to complete the Vestry Charity Trust Forms and Sign a Declaration of having read the Constitution.

Matters arising from Vestry Meeting 3rd November 2017

Election of Bishop - There were no candidates. A further meeting is to be convened on 27th January 2018. George and Irene to attend.

Strutt and Parker-To be contacted re site visit – are they current and up to date? There has been no communication or feedback from them. Ian to progress

Pews-Canon 35 has been completed and sent off regarding the removal and change of position of pews.

Pastoral Care-George has visited several members of the congregation. Several other members of the congregation may be needing extra support in the future. John Usher is awaiting PVG check to enable Pastoral visiting.

Treasurers Report This covers a three-month period.

Income: October	£19,522.11	Expenditure: £33,491.11	Deficit £13,939.00
Total	£21,771.25		

Income: November	£17,469.35	Expenditure: £5,021.71	Surplus £12,447.64
Total	£34,218.89		

Income: December	£1,936.33	Expenditure: £2,188.10	Deficit £251.77
Total	£33,967.12		

Recent renovations and building work has required monies to be transferred from Virgin Monies to enable payment of work accounts.

- Overall: Invoices settled etc. for work carried out £20,917.60
- Grants received to date amounted to £18,144.00
- Outstanding: New church Carpeting.
- The projected shortfall of approximately £9000.00 will be met from our own funds, commendable considering the total cost.
- The monies taken from the Virgin account can now be returned, thanks to grants awarded.
- The audited accounts have been sent to Alan Duffus with completed the financial return.
- OSCR returns also completed and forwarded with accounts.

Property Convenor's Report

Rectory: Parish Room repainted.

Outstanding:

- SW bedroom to be painted
- Some outside building work – joinery work, reconstruction of wall, outside path to be lowered.
- Parish Room: To be cleaned and store tidied. Flooring near fireplace to be tidied up.
- Approximate cost: £2,700.00

Church:

- All proposed work now been completed.

Grounds:

- Larger Trees need monitoring and possible expert attention.
- NW corner grounds need drainage improvements.
- Levelling of East side -preparation for turfing later.

Heating:

- New pellet supplier improved boiler functioning. Being monitored.

Social Group Report

The Ladies have added Sue Manson and Katy Gill to the team.

The Future

Kerry Dixon is meeting with Joint Vestries on Friday 26th January at 1pm in Stonehaven Community Centre to explore and advise ways we can look to expanding the churches local involvement

The Late Reverend John Allard

It is proposed that Rev John's name be inscribed on the list of Clergy within St Ternan's Church. He contributed a great deal to developing the Reserved Sacrament Booklet that is regularly used at our Sunday Services.

A.O.C.B

- Parish Room now ready to be cleaned, reorganised and storage room reassessed. Carol, Rhona and others to progress.
- Excess furniture and literature in Community Room to be sorted.
- Need to 'advertise' St Ternan's facilities.
- Face Book pages have been developed and posted, and already an enquiry has been received. Should be regularly updated with forthcoming events and Local publications – 'Newsy', 'Clochandigher'- to carry advertising to raise public awareness of St Ternan's opportunities.
- Display Boards re-hung in church and information leaflets require updating. John Sheila and Katy are looking to develop a display for visitors and progress
- Heating system dependent on correct pellets and can be problematic, affecting the Rectory heating system. George proposes looking at the cost of a wood/multi-fuel boiler in the Rectory Lounge to ensure adequate and back –up heating system. Vestry Approve.
- The 3 surplus pews at the back of the church are to be retained meantime. Canon 35 allows a 6-month consideration of/for change.

Rhona Vassilikos



Dear God...A little boy's prayer:

"Dear God, please take care of my daddy and my mummy and my sister and my brother
and my doggy and me.

Oh, and please take care of yourself, God.

If anything happens to You, we're going to be in a big mess.

The story behind the hymn: 'Christ Arose!'

This Easter marks the 144th birthday of this much-loved hymn, sung each year by millions of Christians worldwide. It all began on a little pump organ in the living room of a college professor in Pennsylvania, back in 1874.

Robert Lowry was professor of literature at Bucknell University, and pastor of a nearby church. He had a passion for poetry and music and explained his 'muse' this way: 'I watch my moods and when anything strikes me, whether words or music, no matter where I am, at home, on the street, I jot it down. My brain is a sort of spinning machine, for there is music running through it all the time. Sometimes the words come, and the music follows.'

Easter 1874 was approaching, and on this particular day, Robert Lowry had been meditating on the gospel narratives of the Passion and Resurrection. The angel's words at the empty tomb, 'He is not here, but is risen' kept running through his mind. There was something there...

Lowry moved to the little pump organ in his living room and gave himself up to the moment. Soon the words and the music for this joyous Easter hymn just fell into place.

***Christ Arose* By Robert Lowry (1826-1899)**

Low in the grave He lay
Jesus my Saviour!
Waiting the coming day,
Jesus my Lord!

*Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever with His saints to reign,
He arose! He arose!
Hallelujah! Christ arose!*

Vainly they watch His bed,
Jesus my Saviour!
Vainly they seal the dead,
Jesus my Lord!

Death cannot keep his prey,
Jesus my Saviour!
He tore the bars away,
Jesus my Lord!

THE BOY'S OWN PAPER – rambling thoughts by Ken Tonge.

Boy's magazines have been critically reviewed many times, perhaps most effectively by George Orwell in 1939. Concentrating mainly on weekly "comics" Orwell concluded that "All fiction, from novels downward, is censored in the interests of the ruling class. And boys' fiction above all, the blood and thunder stuff which nearly every boy devours, is sodden with the worst illusions of 1910." Orwell says they depict a world in which Britannia rules the waves and no one has heard of slumps, booms, unemployment, dictatorships or concentration camps. He continues, "The fact is only unimportant if one believes that what is read in childhood leaves no impression."

In my own case I don't believe that what I read in the comic books of my young years had a disturbing influence on my later attitudes to militarism, colonialism, politics or dangerous adventures. So, I don't know why I feel uneasy about the way in which today's youngsters find violent videos and computer games entertaining.

Television and the internet appear to have, largely, displaced the printed page and, for a time, the cinema, as the main sources of information and entertainment during out-of-school hours and I wonder if the change in the medium has affected the way exposure to violence in youth influences attitudes in later life.

The illustration from a Boy's Own Paper of 1890 possibly shows an incident in the Sudan as Garnet Wolseley's expedition travelled South along the Nile valley in a belated attempt to relieve General Gordon's forces in Khartoum in 1885. The man lying dead in the sand is one of the so-called Fuzzy-Wuzzies (note his elaborate hair style). It appears he may have been in the process of loading his old muzzle-loader when he was shot by the British trooper armed with his standard issue Lee-Metford repeater rifle. In the background we see the infantry marching steadily South, protected by the mounted scouts. On the Nile, gunboats were also being deployed. In 1890, when donations were being

sought for a Gordon memorial, pictures like this would no doubt inspire youngsters to contribute, perhaps even to enlist in the armed forces.

Interestingly it was not British colonial ambitions in Africa which was the driving force in starting the war in the Sudan but rather it was the American Civil War, which cut off supplies of raw cotton to the mills of Lancashire. Egyptian cotton became a stop-gap import, resulting in Egypt experiencing an economic boom. This wealth allowed Egypt to attempt to extend the Ottoman influence into Sudan. General Gordon was enlisted by the Egyptians to assist in this expansion and Gordon sought to use his position to reform the highly corrupt Egyptian military and to suppress the slave trade on which the economy of the Sudan was largely dependent.

In 1865, with the American Civil War ended and transatlantic trade restored, Egypt's economy collapsed. The Sudanese rose in rebellion under the leadership of the Mahdi and started a jihad to establish an Islamist State in the region. Gordon, sensing that there would be a domino effect extending to the Mediterranean, disobeyed orders from London to evacuate his position at Khartoum. Instead he fortified the area at the confluence of the Blue and White Niles in an effort to defend it. Prime Minister Gladstone's reluctance to commit British forces in a relief effort resulted in a prolonged siege and eventually the total massacre of the 8000 strong Egyptian garrison and 4000 Sudanese citizens by the vastly numerically superior jihadists. Gordon was killed on 26th January 1885. Kitchener eventually defeated the Islamists in 1898. The various campaigns in the region during this period gave rise to many "ripping yarns" such as "The Four Feathers". In essence the conflict continues to this day. The jihad has spread, as Gordon predicted and now engulfs not just the Sudan but the Horn of Africa, Yemen, Afghanistan, Mesopotamia, Syria -----.

The horrors of total warfare in the area are seen daily on television. However, suicide bombers, drone strikes and so-called collateral damage apparently do not generate ripping yarns any longer. Perhaps the reality of modern warfare is seen as distinct from violent computer games by the present generation of young people.

In my own case the Saturday matinee cinema diet of Cowboys and Indians likewise did not prevent me, as a 10 year old, from understanding the reality of the horrors of Belsen and Hiroshima when these appeared on the cinema screen. It was these and similarly reported events that led me into pacifism. Only in later years did I come to understand, through books such as *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, the genocide of native Americans and the truth about colonial wars conducted by Britain and other European nations.

Indian partition, Vietnam, Biafra, Ruanda, and etc. have come and gone in my lifetime the same way that Greek, Roman and Old Testament conflicts did in centuries past. Will it ever change?

End of ramble – Let us not stop praying for peace and understanding between nations and cultures. And let us pray that we ourselves do not contribute to such enmity. Perhaps it can only be through our own individual efforts to love our neighbours that whole nations will find peacefulness.

HOME FREED: the theology of de-cluttering - Part 3: Clutter and Happiness

Advertisers want us to aspire to *own* the things they are marketing: a house full of beautiful furniture, fast cars, the latest technology. The more we own, they tell us, the happier we will be. Up to a point, this is true. Certainly, people with nothing at all are far from happy! Appeals are made to provide water, food, clothes, and medical supplies, for those who have lost everything in a disaster. Babies cry because their needs are not met. Adults cry too.

Owning things that provide warmth and comfort makes us happy. It is easy to assume that if things make us happy, then even more things will make us happier still, and the people who own the most things will be happiest of all. This seems to be the basis of capitalist culture. Happiness, however, does not follow a mathematical equation. Owning more and more eventually creates problems rather than solving them. Wanting is not the same as needing. Precious time and energy goes into maintaining a wealth of possessions, it can become oppressive.

Yet if "God ... richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (I Timothy 6:17) surely an abundance of possessions is a sign of God's blessing? Would that mean the ones with the most clutter are the most blessed by God?

But having something to enjoy is not necessarily the same as owning it, or keeping it long term. I Timothy chapter 6 tells us *why* God blesses people with material goods:

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to . . . set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches . . . They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous and ready to share (From 1 Tim 6:17,18 NRSV).

So, don't be afraid to give away the things that you really don't need! God's blessings enable us to be hospitable and generous. Once our physical and emotional needs are met, the rest of our possessions are clutter. Creative imagination can come into clearing away too. There are many outlets for selling things, it can be fun taking part in a car boot sale for example. There are even more opportunities to give things away, such as charity shops, and Freegle (aka Freecycle) online. Look around your locality. How could you bless other people from the rich abundance that you have enjoyed? Generosity towards other people is a great way to express thankfulness to our generous God.



Numbers

John Usher recently gave me a copy of an article from the Times newspaper (03.02.18) entitled 'Ministers are all dressed up with no one to listen'. In this article it talked about Ministers or Lay

Readers turning up at a rural church to find one person turned up for the service or none!! Villagers gathering in church on Sunday is how many of us like to imagine rural life but owing to the decline in churchgoing this vision is under strain.

In this article they also talked about how some churches were changing in the way they deliver services. One was holding a family service once a month involving craft activities and children acting out parts of the Gospel. Average attendance had increased to 15 people with families attending. Another church held midweek hour of reflection to draw people who 'just want to come and be quiet and don't want a lot of liturgy'.

St Ternan's have not reached that stage of one member turning up on a Sunday yet but do you have any ideas on what we could do to make sure that does not happen!!

Irene Butler



Easter prayer *By Daphne Kitching*

Almighty Father, When life is difficult and the way seems too hard, help us to remember the reality of Easter; of the resurrection of Jesus; of His wonderful saving work on the cross, overcoming death to offer us life for all eternity with you.

There is so much we don't understand, Lord, but you know everything, you are in charge and we can trust you even when we can't work things out.

Thank you for the hope, peace and joy that you alone can give - and all because of the resurrection of Jesus. Thank you that He is alive today and able to help us whatever our situation.

Help us to be your Easter People, reaching out with your love and life.

In Jesus name, Amen.

THE WAY I SEE IT: Mothers and Mothering *Canon David Winter*

The American invention, “Mother’s Day”, will be celebrated on Sunday 11th March, though the cards, boxes of chocolates and reservations for deliveries of flowers will be in the shops long before. It’s a very nice idea, as most of us love our mothers dearly and welcome a chance to celebrate their importance in our lives.

I say “American invention”, because long before Mother’s Day there was a Christian event, marked nowadays in the Church Calendar, with the title ‘Mothering Sunday’. It’s still widely observed in churches on the fourth Sunday of Lent, and yes, that’s 11th March, too.

The difference between them is subtle but profound. ‘Mother’s Day’ is about who she *is*, particularly in our lives. ‘Mothering Sunday’, as its rather awkward name implies, is about a quality which we recognise in mothers but can be present elsewhere – to ‘mother’ someone.

We have all needed mothering, from time to time, and not simply when we were tiny and helpless, literally dependent on our mothers for our sustenance and survival. During the years of the last War I was ‘mothered’ by my grandmother. Sometimes a friend acts in this role for us, when we feel lonely or helpless. ‘Mothering’ means caring deeply, sustaining, supporting, whatever the cost.

That is why God, whom we usually call ‘Father’, is sometimes spoken of in the Bible as ‘mothering’ us, gathering us in His arms of love, even feeding us like a mother. On ‘Mothering Sunday’ we celebrate so much more than our own beloved mums. We celebrate the whole glorious notion of care, compassion and nurture. And of that care, very often our own mothers are the very best examples.



God is able to forgive - Revd Paul Hardingham

'Jesus said to the man, 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.' (Matthew 9:2).

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, *'Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?'* One small boy spoke up, *'Sin!'*

If sin is our greatest problem, then forgiveness is our greatest need. This story of the healing of the paralyzed man reminds us that God *is able* to forgive our sins.

Jesus' first words to the paralytic focus on forgiveness, even though his friends lowered him through the roof to be healed by Jesus. Matthew is making the point that forgiveness precedes healing, as Jesus came first to restore our relationship with God as Father. Like the man, we too can be paralysed by past actions, hurtful words and unforgiveness, that leave us guilty and ashamed. Jesus offers us forgiveness and acceptance to enable a fresh start in our lives.

Jesus was aware of the criticism of the teachers of the law, who believed that only God could forgive sins. As Jesus says, *'Which is easier: to say, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Get up*

and walk”. Jesus secured forgiveness on the cross, which secures transformation from the inside. It gives us power to forgive others and ourselves from past hurts and actions. Finally, Jesus says to the paralysed man, *‘Get up, take your mat and go home.’* The man’s trusting obedience enables him to be completely healed and go home. Where do we need to know forgiveness in our lives and relationships? Are we ready to receive what God promises in our lives?

‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.’ (1 John 1:9).



Four Seasons by Susan Manson

A baby's born and SPRING is here....
New life reflected, who knows no fear
True hope in a future, shaped by love
Trust and faith in God above.
The season's turn by Natures hand
And time slips by like grains of sand
Life experiences and the child is grown
The path is trodden and the years have flown
To arrive at SUMMER, young and strong
To find in life, where you belong
The child is grown and now a man
Who works and plays and follows life's plan
A happy couple...a baby's cry
And all too fast, the years go by
The children's gone and flown the nest
Retirement beckons, more time for rest...
The pace slows down, the AUTUMN years
A time for reflection, to face all fears
The sun goes down on the frail and weak
A man has got the truth to seek
The pattern of life remains the same
It's how you interpret the rules of the game
Before WINTER dawns, the game of life complete
And all contained within man's heartbeat



Ecclesiastes 3: To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:



Behold the Man *by Megan Carter*

He stands condemned, speaks not a word
The crowds resolve that He should die,
Forgetting all His miracles
Hosannas turn to 'Crucify'.

They haul Him to the judgement seat,
Pilate and Herod now become friends,
Enemies no more but one in mind
Together involved in Messiah's end.

Herod mocks Him as a king
Pilate washes his hands of blame,
The crowd now shout out for His death
But He knows it is for this He came.

'It is finished' is the cry,
The curtain rent, a way made in
Upon the Cross the victory won
Behold the Man – it's Christ our King.

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ROTA - MARCH 2018

Date:	CELEBRANT/ Pastoral Assistant/ Address/Chalice	Readers/ Intercessions:	Readings:	Sidesperson	Cleaning/Flow ers Teas
04/03/18 THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT	JOHN USHER <i>Sheila Usher</i>	Ken Tonge Jan Horn Sheila Usher <i>Sue Selway</i>	EXODUS 20: 1-17 1 CORINTHIANS 1: 18-25 JOHN 2: 13-22	Jan Horn	Sue Selway (NO FLOWERS) Carol Masson
11/03/18 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT MOTHERING SUNDAY	ERIC HARGREAVES/ IRENE BUTLER		TO BE ARRANGED	Sue Selway	Muriel Hargreaves (NO FLOWERS) Katy Gill
18/03/18 PASSION SUNDAY	REV JANE NELSON <i>Sheila Usher</i>	Carol Masson Sue Manson Eric Hargreaves <i>Ken Tonge</i>	JEREMIAH 31: 31-34 HEBREWS 5: 5-10 JOHN 12: 20-33	Carl Nelson	Sue Manson/ Di Driver (NO FLOWERS) Peggy Tonge
25/03/18 PALM SUNDAY	PETER SMART <i>Irene Butler</i> George Masson	George Masson Sue Selway Carl Nelson John Usher <i>Sheila Usher</i>	MARK: 11: 1-11 ISAIAH 50. 4-9A PHILIPPIANS 2. 5-11, MARK 14: 1-15 : 47	Eric Hargreaves	Sheila Usher (NO FLOWERS) Rhoda Nelson
29/03/18 MAUNDY THURSDAY	GEORGE MASSON	VOLUNTEERS	EXODUS 12: 1-14 1 CORINTHIANS 11: 23-26 JOHN 13: 1-17, 31b-35		
30/03/18 GOOD FRIDAY 12 TO 3PM	MEDITATIONS AND READINGS		ISAIAH 52: 13-52 12 HEBREWS 10: 16-25 JOHN 18: 1-19.42		
01/04/18 EASTER SUNDAY	PETER SMART <i>Russ Huddleston</i> Carl Nelson	Jan Horn Di Driver Ken Tonge <i>Muriel Hargreaves</i>	ACTS 10: 34-43 1 CORINTHIANS 15: 1-11 JOHN 20: 1-18	Jan Horn	Sue Manson/ Di Driver Carol Masson