

THE RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends

Leonard Hodgson writes:

There is a story of a man who prayed earnestly one morning for grace to overcome his besetting sin of impatience. A little later he missed a train by half a minute and spent an hour stamping up and down the station platform in furious vexation. Five minutes before the next train came in he suddenly realised that here had been the answer to his prayer. He had been given an hour to practise the virtue of patience; he had missed the opportunity and wasted the hour.

I know I can relate to the predicament of this man in his struggle with impatience. How hard it can be to be patient with ourselves and others! Map the day out, plan and schedule tasks to be done and still some things and some people will come along and tear these plans to pieces. Recently I was listening to a sermon where the preacher was urging us to see these interruptions as God's attempt to break in with what and who He wants us to be involved with at that moment. It's hard to deny the good sense of this, but hard to see things that way when the heat is on and deadlines loom!

A good starting point here can be the acknowledgement that all time is a gift from God. If we can step back for a moment from our free will and recognise this, then each day will include a conscious moment, perhaps early in the morning, when we ask God how He would have us spend our time that day. How many problems of juggled priorities and of time spent simply doing the wrong thing could be avoided if we do that?

One thing I have started doing is carrying around with me something small to read in odd moments when I have to wait for something or someone. Often this will be the little Bible study notes which I know many folk use today and which are so convenient for taking from place to place. If you haven't come across these you can find them in Cornerstone Bookshop or Wesley Owen. They come in different forms – Bible Reading Fellowship and "Every Day with Jesus" are among the most popular. Some folk use them in the same place at home every day –

very wise as it helps to set a pattern of daily study. For me though, they're peripatetic – they wander round with me to be used at odd moments.

May God give us the grace to use our time well, and even to value those interruptions which get in our way!

Yours, in His service,

Fred

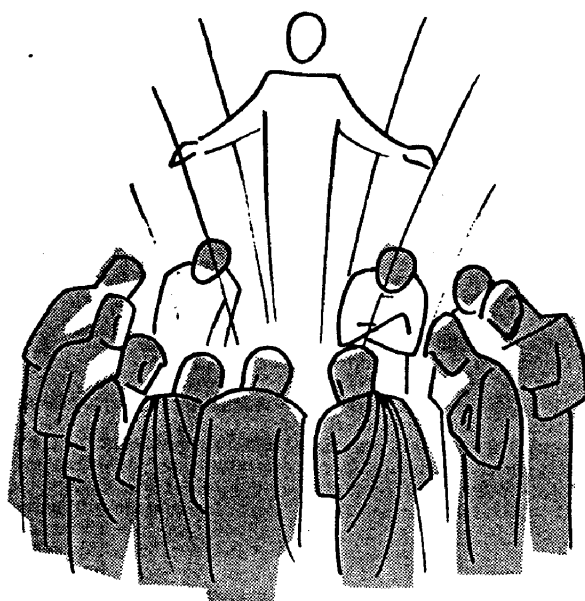
“ST PETER’S IN THE FIELDS”

Ascension Day at Rosslyn Chapel

Thursday 1 May at 8.00pm

As in previous years, we are venturing forth on the evening of Ascension Day, to hold a service of Holy Communion. This year, we are returning to Rosslyn Chapel, following a break of several of years. The choir will be out in force as usual. The Service of Holy Communion will commence at 8.00 pm.

Could anyone who is going and has spaces in a car or anyone who is in need of a lift please ring Harriet Atkinson at the Rectory (667 6224) during Office hours (Tues - Fri 9.30 am - 4 pm. Instructions as to how to get there are available.



MIKE BRANNAN - an appreciation

Fred writes:

I first met Mike at a midweek service when I came to St Peter's early in 2001. I had been to midweek services in other churches – they were always quiet affairs with few people present. The latter was certainly true at St Peter's but there was nothing quiet about this service. Mike made sure everyone had a copy of the hymn book so that the service could begin with his leading us in singing a hymn. It didn't matter how many or how few people were present, Mike's strong voice led us in the singing and made sure we got off to a good start.

Until his stroke, Thursday mornings at St Peter's were a regular part of Mike's routine. Sometimes he stayed on for coffee, but more often than not there was a lunchtime concert or talk at the university and off he would go with his familiar rucksack over his shoulder. A natural scholar, Mike was always on the lookout for events or activities which would widen his knowledge of the world. Such was his strong faith that Mike never doubted that this same world is infused with God's presence and he never held back from seeking that presence in the events and personalities that populated his day.

One further memory of Mike from me: He is sitting up in bed at home, surrounded by books and suffering from a bout of pneumonia. I am sitting nearby and Micheline has just brought us some coffee, while Mike tells me of some theological insight he's picked up from reading about the Russian church in the 19th century. Soon though Mike's talk turns to his family of whom he is immensely proud, of their achievements and of the people they have become.

Like many, I find myself giving thanks for Mike's strong voice and musical ability, for his depth of intellect, for his faith and for the living out of that faith, but above all for his generosity and kindness shown to family and friends alike.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory



SPRING WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN IN P1 – P7

**FRIDAY 11 APRIL
1.30 – 5.00 pm**

**COST £3.50 PER CHILD
(LIMITED PLACES – EARLY BOOKING ADVISED)**



Please make cheque payable to St Peter's Episcopal
Church and send to:

Karen Docwra, 10B Mayfield Terrace, Edinburgh EH9
ISA

(for more information please contact Karen on
0131 668 1538 or Thea on 0131 667 8311)

PAINTING

CRAFT

DRAMA

QUIZ

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESE

LAY REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT ON DIOCESAN SYNOD

Synod always begins with a Eucharist in the cathedral which seems to me a good way to start the day, makes it feel like not just any old meeting.

Some of the business is just plain dull - financial and other reports, discussing canons etc. - it has to be done, but doesn't exactly set the world on fire. We started by spending almost an hour on the Revision of Canons 35 and 36, aiming to bring up to date the differences between incumbencies, independent- and dependent- congregations. Basically the latter two are to be abolished and in future all churches will be incumbencies. There was some argy-bargy about the difference between joint incumbencies and linked charges which will be looked into.

Then we moved on to the main focus of the day which was to look at the Lambeth Conference. The Bishop quoted the 16th century theologian Richard Hooker who said "He that goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be shall never want attentive and favourable hearers" and also Kant who said "perpetual peace is found only in the graveyard". He suggested that turbulence is a sign of life, problems and challenges are no bad thing and not an indication of sickness. He suggested that the Anglican Communion is not at the point of death but at a point of significant creativity. We divided into discussion groups to discuss the following list of subjects which the bishops at Lambeth will be invited to address:-

- Biblical Interpretation
- Ecumenical Management
- Anglican identity & the role of bishops
- Issues of covenant
- The Listening process within the communion
- Engagement with other faiths
- Evangelism and Mission
- Gender and sexuality
- Relationships, including social and family relationships
- HIV / AIDS
- The Millennium Development Goals

After all the groups' reports were handed in the following came out as the most important – (i) The Listening Process (ii) The Millennium Goals (iii) Mission & Evangelism (iv) Relationships and (v) Engagement with other faiths. Gender and sexuality came way down at the bottom – though doubtless this would not be the case at a synod in Uganda. Finally Synod passed this motion “We wish the Anglican Communion to hold together as a family. While recognising that opinions differ, we do not wish to be forced apart.”

After lunch most of the business went very swiftly – could this have been something to do with the time of the kick-off at Murrayfield?? If anyone wants to see a copy of the Diocesan Accounts, the reports of the Provincial Personnel Committee, the Diocesan Mission & Ministry Committee, including International and Youth Committees, I have them at home, also statistics prepared by the Synod Clerk, our very own Fred Tomlinson. A Local Ecumenical Partnership between St John's Princes Street, St Cuthbert's, St George's West and St Andrew's & St George's was formally ratified. Then after the Dean's Report, which was a very funny and clever powerpoint presentation, all was over and off we went to watch Scotland triumph in the Calcutta Cup.

Liz Philp

Lay Representative

TOGETHER AT LAMBETH CONFERENCE

The second of two conferences about the Lambeth conference took place in Haddington on Saturday 23 February. It focused on the Scottish Episcopal Church's place in the Anglican Communion and what Bishop Brian will be taking to Canterbury in July this year.

The Anglican Communion is the global Anglican Church, made up of an estimated 78 million Christians from 38 provinces, spread across the world.

The Bishop began the session by commenting on recent media descriptions of the Anglican Church suffering from a sickness and he questioned whether this is a suitable metaphor to describe the turbulence that is currently felt with regards to the present state of the Anglican Church. It is well reported that there are strong disagreements on issues of homosexuality and what the Anglican response to it should be. On the agenda at Lambeth is a discussion about the proposed Anglican Covenant, which has been drafted in response to the Windsor

Report to address the issues that are threatening the future of the Anglican Communion.

What was made clear from the morning lecture was that diversity of views should be encouraged and that what is required is dialogue and criticism that arises out of informed love. It seems, however, that it will be difficult for this dialogue to take place. The purpose of the Lambeth Conference is for Bishops to come together to actively engage in this sort of conversation. However, a number of Bishops, not just those from African nations but a Bishop from New Zealand, are boycotting Lambeth in favour of an alternative conference in Jordan, where the opinions of those present will be of a similar nature.

The morning session was based on a lecture by Kevin Ward, who has written a book called 'A History of Global Anglicanism'. During this, we were presented with membership figures for the different provinces of the Anglican Communion. Although the SEC is fairly small in comparison with other churches, with an estimated 45,000 members, compared with 400,000 in Ireland and 84,000 in Wales, this was viewed by many as a strength, with comments from people there that this makes it like a family, allowing for constructive conversation, whilst honouring and affirming a diversity of views present within the Province.

The afternoon session gave us snapshots of the Worldwide Anglican Communion. Sarah Tomlinson spoke about her role as the Anglican Consultative Council Youth Representative and her work with the International Anglican Youth Network. She outlined the IAYN's Commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, which include aims to eradicate extreme hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, etc. She quoted Kevin Ward and I think the quotation deserves to be said again here as a hope for the Anglican Communion – "It is my hope that issues of sexual orientation will cease to be the defining issues of Christian identity and that new forms of co-operation and mission, on a global scale, will emerge within the Anglican Communion." This is what the Anglican Communion should be striving for and it is this sort of message that Bishop Brian will be taking to Lambeth on behalf of the SEC and Diocese of Edinburgh.

Harriet Atkinson

MY FAVOURITE HYMN

“O Thou who camest from above” was written by that incomparable hymn writer, Charles Wesley, brother of John Wesley and co-founder of Methodism. One of the strengths of Methodism lay in their hymns, and Charles was, amongst other things, one of their most influential hymn writers. The tune “Hereford”, set to it since 1916, was composed by a Wesley of the next generation, Samuel Sebastian, at one time organist at Hereford Cathedral.

This hymn has meant a lot to me at different times and was sung at my ordination. It is a splendid hymn for all occasions and especially for the Pentecost season. It is a prayer calling for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Like most Wesley hymns it uses Biblical stories and pictures to help us visualise a spiritual experience.

We are reminded of the story of Elijah building an altar on Mount Carmel. The worshippers of Baal had spent all day and all their arts in calling on their gods to send down fire on their altar to no avail. Elijah then drenched his altar with water and called on the living God. Then the “fire of the Lord fell and consumed the offering” on the altar and everything else, even the water. God’s Spirit is never dependent on our efforts. He comes to those who ask and wait, as he came in tongues of flame to the disciples waiting “in one place” at Pentecost. He comes in love and our first response, as the second verse of the hymn says, is “humble prayer and fervent praise”.

We can see the disciples pouring out of their room, praising God with such enthusiasm that bystanders thought they were drunk. But God’s Spirit does not come only for the love and joy we exchange with Him. The third verse speaks of “my heart’s desire to work and speak and think for Thee; still lit me guard the sacred fire and still stir up Thy gift in me”. Spreading the news of the Kingdom follows the receiving of gifts.

This verse I found very hard at one time when it appeared that God was not letting me “work and speak” for Him. Sometimes we are too impatient and want to do things our way. He has other plans. We are not always “Ready for all (His) perfect will”. The final lines of the hymn speak of death in way alien to our times, But in true Christian trust death is a joyful sealing of his “endless mercies” making “the sacrifice complete”.

Marian McKean

A MEDITATION ON JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS

Betrayed by friends and by the crowds contemned
Mocked and flogged and by the court condemned
Nailed to a cross, a lance poked in his side
A lonely, violent death a good man died.
'Accursed is one who hangs upon a tree.'
'Ah ha!' the Jews thus taunted him with glee.
The Greeks in wisdom simply thought it foolish
The conquering Romans all agreed t'was wimpish.
Thus Jews and Gentiles they did not dispute
The Cross for both a place of ill repute.

But at this most unlikely place to meet
God chose here all humanity to greet.
T'was the Roman centurion who hit the mark
'This man is truly son of God,' he remarked
Hearing the cry of Jesus on the tree
'My God, My God why'st thou forsaken me?'
Saint John called this the Son of Man's own hour
Of glory, subverting human modes of power.
The presence of this God is truly hidden.
T'is 'glory', but not the kind that we'd have bidden.

The Cross thus authorises us to look
For God where God's own presence wears a cloak.
Faith is enjoined to tarry at those places
Where absence, pain and pointlessness it faces.
Discerning hidden presence cruciform,
Boldly we learn to take this as the norm
For revelation of divinity
While on this time-bound side of Eternity,
Where matter cannot yet bear the full weight
Of glory undimmed. For that we must wait.

For now, the pinnacle of matter bearing
Divinity: a body scarred and bleeding,
In Eucharistic Bread and Wine remembered
A suffering divinity en-mattered.
Let's take the cross and follow on this way
While waiting for the final Easter Day.
Corruption will then put on incorruption

When space-bound matter undergoes transition
To bear the full weight of divinity.
Then hiddenness will yield to clarity.

Wilson Poon

Good Friday 2008

Adapted from a longer poem, 'Discerning Divinity',
with a new opening stanza.

SENIOR MOMENTS

I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I go my doctor's for permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But by the time I got my leotard on, the class was over.

Know how to prevent sagging? Just eat until the wrinkles fill out.

Reporters interviewing a 104-year-old woman: 'And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?' the reporter asked. She simply replied, 'No peer pressure.'

It's scary when you start making the same noises as your coffeemaker.

I've sure gotten old! I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to black outs. Have bouts of dementia. Have poor circulation; hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 85 or 92, have lost all my friends. But, thank goodness, I still have my driver's licence.

Submitted by

Betty McEntire

MONDAY GROUP

We've had two very interesting meetings since our last report. The Park Ranger couldn't attend so instead on 3 March a DVD on Edinburgh, narrated by the artist Richard de Marches was obtained – it brought home to us what a beautiful city we live in and the anecdotes were most interesting, particularly about the body snatchers at Duddingston Kirk graveyard.

Our next meeting was a visit to a member's friend who has the most marvellous collection of dolls' houses superbly furnished and full of the most minute details from the old fashioned clothes-horse to the "receptacle" under the bed. The collection ranged from Victorian times to a model of the family's beautiful house in the Grange.

We were warmly welcomed by the hostess and relaxed afterwards in true Episcopalian style over a glass of wine and nibbles with plenty of chat and laughter – a most enjoyable evening.

Our final meeting is our AGM on 7 April – any ideas for our next syllabus will be welcome. We finish the session with the May drive and our members' dinner in June.

Where does the time go? Started you Christmas shopping yet?

Betty McEntire

President

GUILD

Our meeting with Morag (Guide Dogs for the Blind) went off splendidly. She was an excellent speaker and she had her dog, of course – a beautiful labrador – so friendly.

Our AGM is coming up so we hope many will turn up for this. We are hoping to open our meeting in October with Dr Wight - the well known chiropractic doctor.

Our baking stall and bric-a-brac sale is on 6 April. Please support us either with donations of baking or any jumble. Please give all you can to make this a huge success. Arthur is going to donate a painting for us to raffle.

Mary Johnson

ST PETER'S WALKING GROUP

Our next two walks are:

Saturday 3 May – **St Abb's Head**. This is a chance for us to revisit this beautiful cliff top walk out to the lonely lighthouse, surrounded by seabirds and the sound of the sea crashing in below. The walk is only four miles in length and is graded "easy" in the books, but please note that there are some steep sections, and this, combined with the fresh air will guarantee you won't have trouble sleeping that night! We will look to finish with tea and scones at the visitors' centre before returning.



Saturday 7 June – **Jedburgh along the Border Abbey's Way**. Once again this will be a joint walk with St Fillan's Walking Group at Buckstone, where Fred was Rector previously. The walk includes a stroll along the beautiful river Teviot. The walk is likely to be around seven miles in length and suitable for most people.

If you haven't been on one of the walks before, please do think about coming along. We leave from the rectory at 3 Brights Crescent at 10 am sharp. Please bring a packed lunch and some waterproofs, and wear stout shoes or boots.

VISIT TO HOLY ISLAND

Fred writes:

On Sunday 10 August this year we're planning to have a St Peter's outing to Lindisfarne. I know many members of the congregation have happy memories of trips there in years gone by, including stopping for fish suppers in Berwick on the way home. My hope is that we can have a repeat of this.

We're booking a bus and hope that as many folk as possible travel this way as it adds, I think, a real sense of togetherness. Having said that, there may be some folk who would find a car more convenient when it comes to transporting a family and associated bits and pieces, so please don't hesitate to do this if it applies to you.

My plan at the moment is to have the 8.30 am service as usual that day, but to set off at 11 am and to have a service on the island if possible. The important thing though is to ask you to put this date in your diary now. It should be a good day for us as a church family, and I do hope you will feel able to come along.

AREA STUDY PROJECT

ST PETER'S AND PRIESTFIELD

Fred writes:

I'm writing to invite you to take part in an ecumenical initiative organised jointly by St Peter's and Priestfield Churches in the coming weeks.

From mid-April to mid-May our two churches will be undertaking a study of the area covered by Priestfield Parish. We will be looking at how the area and its people have changed and developed over the years and, most importantly, where the mission opportunities are for us today. This will involve us coming together to firstly, walk round the parish on 13 April, then dividing up into small groups (or even as individuals) to undertake some research before coming back together again on 17 May to collate our findings and put them into a form ready to present to the two congregations.

Through engaging jointly in this project, our hope is too that friendships will develop and deepen between and within our two churches.

Please do note that the project is very time-limited – it starts on 13 April and finishes on 17 May. It would be very helpful – **but not essential** – if you could take part in the events on those days as described below.

Key dates

Neighbourhood Walk around the area of Priestfield Parish on the afternoon of **Sunday 13 April 2008.**

1.45 - 2.20 **Exploration** of ourselves and briefing in Priestfield Hall

2.20 - 3.30 Walk in groups of 5 around different parts of the parish

3.30 - 3.45 Cup of tea back in Church Hall

3.45 - 4.15 Debrief

4.15 - 4.30 Outline of next stage

4.30 - 5.00 Signing up and brief act of commissioning worship

The research tasks to be given out come under the following 8 headings:

1. **history** of the area

2. **photographic record** of both 'now and then'

3. **economic** make-up of the area: industries, jobs, public services

4. **social make-up** of the area: population, racial/ethnic character;

age groups; housing; community issues

5. **political:** parties at Holyrood and Westminster; voting patterns, informal community leadership

6. **cultural character** of the area: state of the arts, predominant values, variety of lifestyles; leisure activities

7. **religious make-up:** percentage of different faiths; involvement of religious groups in area

8. **how people feel** about the area: questionnaire

Then everyone will meet together in St Peter's Luton Place on **Saturday 17 May from 10 am - 3.30 pm**

Possible programme for that meeting

10.00 -10.15	Opening act of worship
10.15 -11.30	Analysis of data
11.30 -1.15	Reflection on the connections
1.15 - 2.00	Soup and Sandwich Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Response
3.00 - 3.30	Closing dedicatory worship

Please do think about taking part. It should be good fun as well as interesting! More details from me on 667 6224.

Fred

SUNDAY'S COOL TEACHERS' TRAINING

led by Morag Buxel

DIOCESE OF EDINBURGH YOUTH WORKER

SATURDAY 19 APRIL

10.30 am - 12.30 pm

followed by soup and cheese lunch.

St Peter's Church Hall, Luton Place

Please let the church office know whether or not you are coming by 14 April. Either 'phone the office on 667 6224 or e-mail office@stpeters-edinburgh.fsnet.co.uk

REGULAR MEETINGS AND DATES

SUNDAYS

- 9.30 am Breakfast in the hall
5.15 pm Youth Club for children aged 9-10 meets in Youth Club Room
6.30 pm Youth Club for children aged 11+ meets in the Youth Club Room.

MONDAYS

- 9.30 am 0-5's Parents and Toddlers Group meets in Large Hall
7.45 pm Monday Group meets on 1st and 3rd Mondays in the choir vestry

TUESDAYS

- 7.30 pm Prayer Group meets for the at 12 Hallhead Road

WEDNESDAYS

- 2.30 pm Guild meets on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in the Hall during the winter

THURSDAYS

- 9.30 am 0-5's Parents and Toddlers Group meets in Large Hall
11.00 am Holy Communion in Millar Chapel
4.00 pm St Peter's Singing Club for P1 - P4 children
6.30 pm Voice for Life in choir vestry
7.00 pm Junior choir practice. Adults at 7.45 pm

SATURDAYS

- 9.50 am Walking Group meet outside the Rectory on 1st Saturdays in the month

SUNDAY SERVICES - for details see inside front cover & page 20.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Wed 2 April : 8.00 pm Worship Advisory Group meets at Rectory
Sat 5 April : 9.50 am Walking Group walk in East Lothian. Meet at Rectory for departure at 10.00 am sharp.
: 1.00 pm Wedding of Chris Lindsay to Anneleen Mulholland
Mon 7 April : 7.45 pm Monday Group AGM in choir vestry
Frid 11 April : 1.30 pm Children's Spring Workshop
Sun 13 April : 10.45 am Baptism of Gwendoline Matthews
: 1.45 pm Walk with Priestfield
Tues 15 April : 7.45 pm Vestry meets in Rectory
Sat 19 April : 10.30 am Sunday's Cool Teacher training
Sun 20 April : 10.45 am Baptism of James McKenna
Fri 25 April : 10.30 am Cairn Coffee Morning
Tue 29 April : 7.30 pm Newington Churches Together meet at Priestfield
Wed 30 April : Guild half day outing, the Grange Hotel, N.Berwick
Thursday 1 May : 8.00 pm Ascension Day service at Rosslyn Chapel