

Crown Terrace Methodist Church
praise | hope | care

Pentecost

2012



A LETTER FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends in Christ,

As a Welshman coming to Aberdeen, I was one who always wondered what the Scots wore underneath their kilts, now I know! What you hold most dear in your hearts I also know, but my prayer is that it becomes the love of Jesus. I have journeyed with you for four years, and we have shared so many good times as well as sad times. I know that I did not see all of you at my last service, but it was my request to finish the journey as quietly and as unobtrusively as possible.

It has been my privilege to work alongside some of the best Church stewards that I have ever had as my colleagues, and I want to say thank you to them. Look after your new minister John, he may be very different in personality, but he has a heart for the Lord. Look after each other. I will miss you but know that you are in safe hands.

You may remember that, when he first preached, Tom Greggs shared with you the need of the Holy Spirit. What better time is there than this Pentecost to pray together for a refreshing of God's Holy Spirit who makes all things new? I write this just before my sabbatical begins and during this time I hope to see something of this beautiful part of the country. I have seen the beauty of the daffodils outside the ward in ARI so many times and I know that Scotland has even more wonderful things to see. The Good Friday walk of witness this year was one of the best that has ever been, an indication that God's Spirit is moving.

I wasn't around at the time of the Welsh revival, and do not expect to be around when the revival comes to Scotland but I believe it is starting to happen and that God has many good things in store. Each one of you has an important part to play, remember he has called each one of you by name; do not be deaf to his voice.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for the generous gift I received from the stewards; I was really touched and thankful.

Wherever God leads me and wherever I shall be I will continue to pray for you. There will I know be changes in the circuits and the district in the future, but the gospel and the great commission remain the same and the love of God for his church does not change. May he continue to bless all of us.

Ken

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



Births

To Louisa (née Duguid) and David McKay on Saturday 22nd October a daughter, **Freya Henrietta**, first grandchild for Kathleen Duguid.

To Luke Dyer and Mel McRae a son, **Matthew James Mawuli**.
Matthew was christened by Rev Paul Ellingworth on Sunday, April 29th



To Giorgy and Sylvia Tabudravu a daughter, **Hannah**

To Lindsay and John Richardson on Friday May 4th, a daughter, **Anna**, a sister for Sophie and granddaughter for Douglas & Isobel Paterson. Everyone is doing well in their new home in Kegworth, Leicestershire.

Baptism & Confirmation

On Sunday January 15th by Rev Ken Morgan, **Ruwini Iresha Seresinhe**

On Sunday May 6th by Rev Howard Marshall, **Hannah C McIver**

Deaths

Maurice Hately on Saturday, March 31st 2012 following a long illness.

Maurice was a good friend to many in Crown Terrace and a highly respected local preacher who fulfilled his calling with zeal and diligence in the Aberdeen Circuit and later also in Inverness.

David Lepoidevin on Thursday, April 5th 2012

David was a kind Christian gentleman who served Crown Terrace faithfully in many capacities and was a good friend to all. He was a loving husband to his late wife Elaine, an adored father to Louise, Jonathan and Robert, a cherished partner to Nora and a greatly loved grandpa to his eight grandchildren.

St. PETER/CROWN TERRACE RELATIONS

A newsletter from St Peter

“Let brotherly love continue” - Hebrews 13:1

It is with great pleasure that we send you this newsletter. Our partnership in church twinning has been of great benefit and we thank God for your lives. We have not stopped praying for you and surely, we trust that our relationship will go a long way to the glory of God.

1 ABERDEEN VISIT

Two of our ministers in the persons of Very Rev Michael Bossman and Very Rev Philip Mintah and also two members, Lucy & Ernestina, had the chance to visit Crown Terrace. The report they brought back was warm and refreshing. They had a personal experience of life in the North East of Scotland and appreciated all the efforts you put in to support us here in St. Peter, Mile 7. We are most grateful. We look forward to seeing you return their visit this year and feversish preparations are being made to receive you.

2 JOYCE NEEDY FUND

As discussed with the Very Rev. Philip Mintah on his last visit, efforts are being made to recoup monies owed to the fund. Georgina, who benefitted from this fund by way of setting up a hairdressing salon, has agreed to train girls who are not able to continue schooling, to learn the trade. Sophia who also got into the sale of soft drinks, is doing very well too.

3 CREDIT UNION

Experts from the Credit Union Association in Ghana have been invited to come and speak to the whole church on how we could start one at our level. Education is still on going.

4 DOREEN WALLS/St. PETER METHODIST EDUCATION FUND

This fund has been very operative. It now takes care of Jennifer Kesson and Nana Yaw Osei Wusu Bonsu who is 9 years old. Jennifer is in her final year at the Accra Wesley Girls' Senior High School and Nana Yaw is in class 4. Thanks for your support.

5 LIBRARY PROJECT

The expansion of the library, as seen in the documentary sent to you by Very Rev Mintah on his last visit, is on course. We hope that your coming will coincide with the opening of the library.

6 GHANAIAN GROUP

St. Peter Methodist Society owes the Ghanaian group special thanks and appreciation for always going an extra mile to support us. You are so dear to our hearts. We love you and we pray that God will truly replenish you in all that you do. Thank you and stay blessed, each and every one of you.

The church continues to grow from strength to strength. The organisations are being revived and class meetings strengthened. Church projects are on course and spiritual programmes such as retreats and seminars are going on. Our prayer is that the good Lord will strengthen Crown Terrace as well. Again, we are praying for you. And when you say a prayer, please say one for us.

GOD BLESS YOU.

A LETTER FROM JENNIFER KESSON TO WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP.

JENNIFER'S EDUCATION HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY THE FUND SET UP IN THE NAME OF
DOREEN WALLS AS MENTIONED IN ITEM 4 IN THE NEWSLETTER

Dear Guardians,

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

I am happy to write you this letter. It has been a few years since you took up the sponsorship of my schooling. I have not seen or met you before, but the love and concern you have shown me has indeed changed my life.

I have been able to go through school and hopefully by the grace of God, I will graduate this summer. There are still some challenges, but I am trying hard. I always pray for you.

I have heard that some of you will visit our church this year. Are all of you going to come? I pray that God will bring you to Ghana safely. I love you all and God richly bless you.

Your daughter,

Jennifer

A MEDITATION ON PENTECOST FROM REV. LORNA MURRAY

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came among the early believers, with a sound like wind, and appearing like fire. We know the wind to be life-enhancing, especially when we think of it as air, or as breath. But wind can also bring devastation and destruction. Fire, in the form of heat and light, is essential to life. Like the wind, however, fire can also destroy life.

The Holy Spirit, though *likened* to wind and fire, is never destructive or harmful. God's Spirit is among us to lead us towards 'life in all its fullness': the effects of human activity led by the Spirit are always life-enriching.

This is the good news of Pentecost : God's Spirit *is* with us, as challenge, as enabler, as guide. But how can we be sure it is the voice of the Spirit that we are responding to? What can we do to ensure that the 'fire' of enthusiasm in the plans that we make will lead us in the direction God wants for his people? At this time, there are difficult decisions to be made within the church at both local and national level. There is also the need to identify appropriate ways of caring in the community around the church building. It is, therefore, essential that we do all we can to ensure that our plans and our actions are guided, not by human desire, but by the life-enhancing Spirit of God.

At Synod last month, when members were hearing about plans to re-organise the Scotland District as one Circuit, the representative from the Society of Friends offered a helpful piece of advice. She recommended that, whatever our views, we each ask of ourselves 'might I be wrong?' This advice I find helpful for two reasons.

Firstly, it is always good to remind ourselves of the danger of telling ourselves – or assuring others – that an idea or a plan is an 'answer to prayer' or 'of the Spirit'. As individuals, concerned to do the right thing, and taking time to listen for God's Word, it is always possible to convince ourselves that what seems to us to be a good idea is what God wants us to do. Those early believers, when the Spirit came at Pentecost, were *gathered together*: the gift of God's Spirit was for the whole community. God does, of course, speak also to individuals: it is important, though, always to test out our sense of God's guidance by reflecting on this experience with fellow believers.

Secondly, asking ourselves 'might I be wrong?' enables us to distance ourselves from our particular interests, our experience, our enthusiasm; to stand back and consider how these might be preventing us from seeing *another* way, or from being open to an *alternative* solution.

Looking outside of ourselves in these ways, we become more open to new perspectives. We see from the point of view of others what we ourselves have failed to notice. We listen more openly to God's guidance.

The life-enhancing Spirit is among us; let us give thanks through life-enhancing words and deeds.

POINTS TO PONDER

Stephen Hester may have turned down his £963,000 share bonus, but why does he need £1 million to run the Royal Bank of Scotland?...If we are uncomprehending of the RBS chief's telephone-number earnings we should note that most people in the world have equal moral claim to be outraged at what we earn and consume. Britons are among the richest people on the planet at the richest moment in world history. We should perhaps be more careful about the mote in our own eye....

For John Wesley the test was encapsulated in his famous trilateral: earn all you can; save all you can; give all you can. The great Methodist certainly practised what he preached. During his lifetime he earned the equivalent of £20 million in today's money. When he died, he had just two silver spoons and a few coins to his name. He had given everything else away....

© Tim Montgomery The Times, Monday, January 30th 2012:

In a wholly secular culture, forgiveness is either absent or at best some vague indifference to morality altogether. Forgiveness is not indifference. Apologising is not making excuses. The power of simply being able to say: "I was wrong, I hurt you, I'm truly sorry, forgive me" is that it allows honesty to purge our lives of self-righteousness, the most toxic of all emotions.

Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth

My biggest problem starts on Easter Monday. I regard it as absurd and unjustifiable that we should spend forty days keeping Lent ... and then ...have a *single day* of celebration. ... Is it any wonder the world doesn't take much notice if Easter is celebrated as simply the one-day happy ending tacked on to forty days of fasting and gloom?

In particular, if Lent is a time to give things up, Easter ought to be a time to take things up. ... The forty days of the Easter season, until the ascension, ought to be a time to balance out Lent by taking something up, some new task or venture, something wholesome and fruitful and outgoing and self-giving."

Tom Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, pp. 267-9.

SYNOD AND A SINGLE SCOTTISH CIRCUIT

At the recent Methodist Synod in Dundee it was decided by a large majority that the Methodist Church in Scotland should become a single circuit. Below circuit level there are to be Mission Centres, as yet to be designated single churches or groups of churches. We might, for example, envisage the North of Scotland Circuit breaking up into three Mission Centres: Aberdeen, Peterhead and the Moray Coast, though one could envisage the Coast being linked with Inverness and Aberdeen with the south. Prior to synod the proposals had been discussed by representatives of churches in our circuit, who had unanimously agreed with the proposal. Our own Bob Kelley is to be a member of the District team charged with adding flesh to the as yet undefined new structure.

The critical question to be answered is what the relationship is to be between the single circuit and the mission centres.

In some ways the retention of “circuit” is unfortunate because it might suggest that the powers currently exercised by the eight circuits should be enjoyed by their successor. Our own experience indicates that would be undesirable, because the breakdown of the present system in our own circuit is because it lacks coherence of purpose and there is a crisis of responsibility and accountability in relation to financial planning. A centralised single Scottish circuit could result in our local difficulties writ large. What would be the consequences, for example, if all the Scottish churches assessments were determined in Dunblane? There are also severe limitations to the capacity of the centre to undertake any detailed strategic planning. That is not to say it might not consider the merits of mission centre appeals for financial support for their various projects. In my opinion, therefore, the presumption should be that the circuit should not exercise any function that could be undertaken by a local mission centre. The circuit should be regarded as residual.

If the new structure is to operate successfully it will require strong mission centres, responsible for their own management, the raising, distribution and control of financial resources and the construction of locally determined plans for mission, because unless the locality has ownership of its activities the congregation will be weakly motivated, reluctant to give, and have a diminished sense of responsibility. In an activity such as churches are engaged in, the local interface between its members and society is critical and cannot be second-guessed by a remote centre even a few miles away. It follows that the distribution of professional staff (a scarce resource) should be concentrated in the mission centres. If there are only twenty ordained ministers, for example, it seems to be an inefficient use of them to have a superintendent supported by two or three others. Three or four “separated” chairmen are not the way forward. It is critical that the new structure should increase local empowerment and not emasculate it.

My support for change, therefore, is heavily conditional, and arises principally out of a conviction that the present system is not fit for purpose. The new proposals could make things a lot, lot worse if centralising tendencies have their way. If the devolvers succeed, however, new possibilities are opened up, hopefully through a challenged and re-energised local leadership in conjunction with ministers re-ignited with a renewed sense of purpose and calling.

Michael Dyer

At Pentecost the Spirit came,
With rushing wind and tongues of flame.
All there, were filled with life and power,
No longer did they fear or cower.

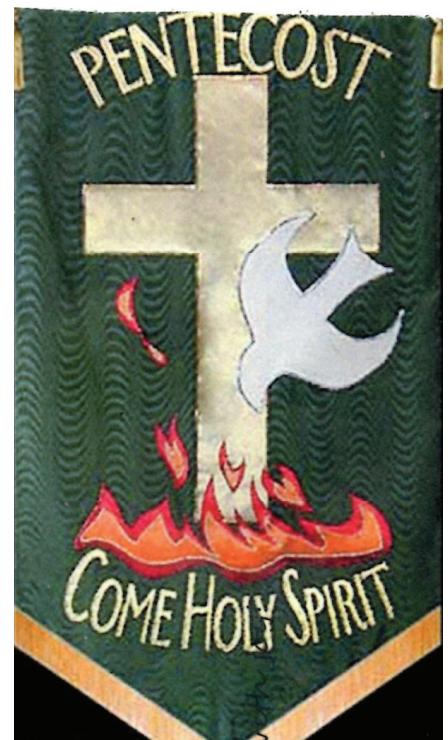
That wondrous life is ours today
If we but follow in His way,
He gives us peace, He gives us joy,
Life free from taint or sin's alloy.

He gives us power, He gives us hope,
And strength enough that we may cope.
Only in Him our way is clear,
And without Him our ways are drear.

He does not leave us sad and lone
To struggle on, all on our own;
He gives New Life our souls to lift -
How precious is that wondrous gift!

Then let us praise Him joyfully
For taking all our sins away;
He gave His life that we might live
And know for sure God will forgive.

Evelyn Young



BOB KELLEY'S SELECTION OF ORDINARY WEBSITES, GIVING CHRISTIAN NEWS AND INFORMATION APLENTY. SEE HIS ARTICLE 'CONNECTIONS' A LITTLE FURTHER ON.

<http://www.methodistchurchinscotland.org.uk/> gives information on all the Circuits in the District, what's going on, videos of the mission taking place throughout Scotland, Small Group resources etc.

<http://www.aberdeenmethodist.org.uk/> is our own website. See if you can think of any additional material, and I'm sure Jackie will be pleased to hear from you.

<http://ship-of-fools.com/> Ah! satire from "The Magazine of Christian Unrest"

<http://www.g4g.org.uk/> Gospel for Grampian. Internet radio, where we still have our Sunday Services broadcast **to the world** on Wednesday evenings.

<http://www.the-abcd.org.uk/> Fit's gaan on in Aberdeen's Christian community. You can have the monthly diary sent to you by e-mail if you'd like.

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/> The much improved national church website, with resources aplenty for your studies, devotions and inspiration.

GREETINGS FROM RITA MUNEZERO



I told some of you before I left in September that I was engaged. The wedding is planned this summer, but before the proper wedding, we have to do the traditional wedding, when the dowry is paid to the bride's family. Traditionally, the dowry was a female cow that hasn't calved yet. Nowadays they give an amount of money as a symbol of the dowry. The bride's family prepare all the ceremony and make sure they receive well the groom's family. The bride shows up only when the two families

have agreed about the dowry...the traditional wedding is an important part of the whole wedding ceremonies, because all the two families members have to be present, to be introduced to one another.

I keep a good memory of the time I spent in Aberdeen, I felt the love of each person I met in the church, the real love! I'll always pray for you. May God bless each one of you. When I'm done with my studies, I'll come to greet you.

TO PAUL ELLINGWORTH FROM JOHN URQUHART

JOHN URQUHART IS ONE OF THE TRANSLATORS OF THE NEW GAELIC NEW TESTAMENT. HE IS A MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WHO TEACHES AT THE GAELIC COLLEGE ON SKYE

This week a lass working in a neighbouring office came into mine, looking slightly nervous.

She explained that although she doesn't go to church she has started reading her Bible every day and that she is also praying to God every day.

She told me she wishes her sister, whom she loves very much, did likewise. We had a great chat about God, the Word and the Church and she seemed to enjoy this.

Then she said that the Bible she's trying to read is the one her grandmother had, and that the Gaelic is really difficult for her to understand ... as are the Roman numerals!

Her face just lit up as I placed a free copy of the new Gaelic version of John's Gospel (bought by my wife) into her hands.

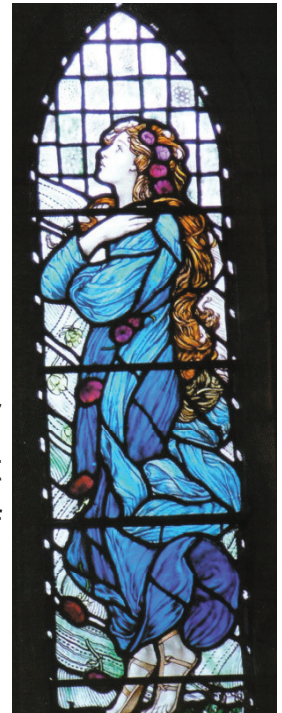


THE CELEBRATION FOR THE WORK OF CHURCHES HOUSE IN DUNBLANE TOOK PLACE ON THE 21ST OF JANUARY THIS YEAR, AND DELIA MCKEAN REPRESENTED CROWN TERRACE AT THE EVENT.

Dunblane Cathedral

Many of those who had worked at Churches House, visitors to the centre, and those who had supported its work over the years attended this event. For those interested, copies of the order of service were left at the back of Crown Terrace at the time but one of the main themes running through the service was of thanks for the witness the centre had been and hope for the future. Although the current financial climate precludes any re-opening of the centre, or even a similar one nearby, there is still a thought that such a place is needed by those who used it in the past and the need for a place of retreat is still present today. Whether this desire is met in the near future remains to be seen.

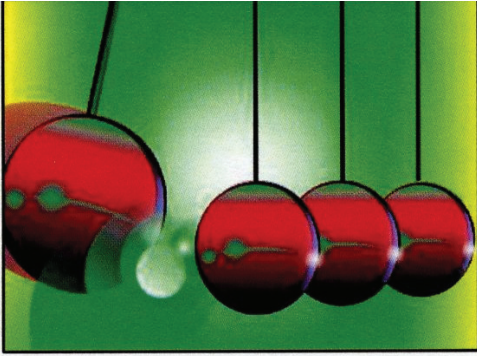
In Aberdeen we are lucky enough to have access to other facilities, but the centre at Churches House in Dunblane met the needs of many from the Central Belt. The ceremony itself was poignant but hopeful and I would like to leave you with this image of Hope taken from a stain glass window in the Dunblane Cathedral



The [Methodist] Church is committed to caring for all who serve the Church, whether lay or ordained, paid or volunteer.

The Revd Dr Martyn Atkins

General Secretary of the Methodist Church and Secretary of the Conference.



**Wedi'r holl esgusodion – adnabod,
wynebu'r amheuon:
gweld, trwy ffydd, y rhybuddion –
nid dal i ganu'r hen dôn.**

Below is a translation of this verse that appears on the first page of the Church Handbook of the Welsh Independents - our CPD, 14 pages long

*After all the excuses - recognising,
facing all the uncertainties:
seeing, through faith, the warnings -
not continuing to sing the same old song.*

Guto Dafydd tr. Delyth Evans

MDC

Graham Slater was a fellow-student of mine, and a teacher of Ken Morgan. He had been a loving pastor, the Methodist principal of a college, and for many years the carer of a physically handicapped wife.

This did not leave him much time for writing, but in 2005 he published *The Holy Spirit*, the last slim volume in Epworth Press's "Thinking Things Through" series, of which he was joint editor. Towards the end of that book, he wrote:

Our churches ... must not only play their part in bringing people alive by communicating the gospel but also sustain that new life in every possible way. If this goal is to be realised, Christians will need to discern the presence of God in the whole of life – hence William Temple's comment about the Holy Spirit being the Person of the Trinity 'with whom we are most conscious of being constantly in contact'. They will need, too, to see that the Spirit is not to be identified with the striking and unusual – hence Bruner and Hordern's remark about the Holy Spirit being 'the shy member of the Trinity'. Finally, they will need to trust what God has given them by creation – hence Karl Barth's comment about the Holy Spirit being 'the intimate friend of commonsense'.

P.E.

CONNECTIONS

I go back to the days when computers were mechanical devices - no, not an abacus, but a machine. As an apprentice in a research establishment, I was tasked with doing lots of simple calculations on a beautifully engineered machine where you set the numbers, turned the handle and got the result to a large number of decimal places. I remember the first electronic calculator a friend spent a precious £25 on. It did the same as the machine - add, subtract, multiply, divide. Now, of course, I carry in my pocket a device which makes "The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy" look a bit sparse, Very useful things, computers. But do we make full use of them for our spiritual and religious life? At the Chinese Church New Year service, a young lad read the lesson from his smartphone; at our House Group, people read the set works from iPads, Kindles and any kind of electronic device, such is the capacity for electronic memory.

So what's my point? Well, there's so much going on electronically, that it should be and is used for Christian purposes. For instance, YouTube isn't just for badly made videos of idiot antics, although there are a lot of those - just go to YouTube and search for "Wedding in Cana", or "Woman at the Well". You'll get a little dross, but mostly you'll get some inspirational films which give insights into the stories of Jesus. After that, see what else you can find of inspirational films on Bible subjects and songs and stories they have generated, and you'll be amazed. And for those with the smartphone or the tablet (that's the computer not the sweetie) the Methodist Church has a free App for both Apple and Android devices which gives access to:

- Daily Bible studies, featuring a different author each week
- The latest news stories from the Methodist Church in Britain
- Topical podcasts from Methodist Web Radio
- Resources for Christian discipleship
- Blogs from the President and Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Methodist Youth President and World Church Relationships team
- View videos through the Church's YouTube channel
- Interact on Facebook and Twitter
- Information about the latest campaigns and the Church's involvement in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Go on, what's stopping you? No computer? - get along to the Public Library - they'll even show you how to Google.

BOB KELLEY SELECTS SOME ORDINARY CHURCH WEBSITES GIVING NEWS AND INFORMATION APLENTY A FEW PAGES BACK

THINGS WE WANT TO SAY BUT CAN'T QUITE FIND THE WORDS

He bids us build each other up;
And gathered into one,
To our high calling's glorious hope
We hand in hand go on.

It was one May Sunday in 1976 when a young man first entered Crown Terrace, it being the only Methodist Church in Aberdeen where he had just started work. He knew a couple of colleagues from previous employment but everyone else in the city was a stranger.

The Minister at the time was Haydn Wainwright and James Smith was at the door and made a point of speaking to him. He went again the next week. A couple of months later his wife and family joined him and, again, James was there to greet the new arrivals.

Miraculous things were in store; the children became involved in a wonderfully active and meaningful Sunday school where friendships were made that are still precious. Our 'young man' became a steward, pastoral visitor, member of Church Council, an Ogilvie Trustee and an advisor to many. His wife found what she thought didn't exist outside the church she had known all her life, a new 'family' and a home from home; she became a founder member of Women's Fellowship, Church Council secretary and enjoyed discovering new IT skills through editing the magazine and weekly notice sheet. Links with Ghana, where they lived in the early 1970's, were rekindled.

This wee family thus became a part of the Crown Terrace family which, 36 years later, we realise are a real communion of saints. We can recall many of the names but not all of them so will not make a list. What we do know are the friendships we have made and the many acts of kindness and support which have "built us up" in the faith and sustained and supported us over those years.

Now the time has come for another move. In a few months we will be leaving you but we want to take this opportunity to try and put into words what is more easily communicated with a hug.

Be encouraged. In 1976 when we first arrived, the fellowship of Crown Terrace Methodist Church existed. Its effective organisation meant there was a physical place where our young family could come and worship. Starting with James and Haydn and followed by so many others, there was a genuine interest in our life and when needs arose, it was followed up by practical help. Many similar stories can be told of new people from all over the world coming into the fellowship and they will keep coming. Such people are precious; what you do here in Crown Terrace for the stranger who becomes a friend is something to be immensely proud of. Hold on and keep going for what you do bears much fruit.

Dear friends, we will miss you. Thank you for your love.

Graham & Katherine Dalton

And it's from the old I travel to the new
Keep me travelling along with you

TABLE TENNIS “C” TEAM TAKE HOME THE TROPHY

In a year of fierce competition at the top of Division One, the all ladies team of University Harriers took the title. Crown Terrace's domination of recent years slipped away as Martin Richens was pulled away by academic work, and others suffered some temporary loss of form. The A team finished fourth.

The B team led by Willis Ma, promoted just last season from Division Two, found the going just too tough this year. With only one league win to their credit, they return to the second division next season. Sadly we say goodbye to Willis Ma, B team captain, and local member of the Chinese church, who has been with us for nine years. Willis, along with Priscilla his wife, and children, Lok Hymn and Lok Sum, will shortly move south to Reading.

It was left to the C team to restore CTM's reputation. Playing in Division 3, they stayed close to the top of the league throughout the season, ending as runners up to Westhill Foxes. But they overcame the Foxes by 8 points in the Handicap competition to bring home the Granite City Trophy to Crown Terrace.

REPORT FROM MWiB SPRING RALLY

The Circuit Spring Rally of Methodist Women in Britain was held at Buckie on Wednesday 16th May. MWiB was launched at Conference in Southport in July 2011 and its first President; Jill Baker addressed the meeting at Buckie. Her first contribution was the story of Esther, expanding the theme “For such a time as this” and for her second slot she told us of her visits to Ghana and Zimbabwe. She showed us lots of pictures including one of Victoria Falls with its abundant water and energy resources and made the observation that Zimbabwe is short of water and electricity.

She made several other thought provoking observations.

- “Are we guilty of hiding behind regulations instead of taking risks?”
- “Saying “No” to God diminishes our Christian lives”
- “We need to be a movement fit for purpose”
- “We need to connect and work in partnership”

It was very much an ecumenical event with about 90 ladies, mostly from the Coast, plus Alan Lee and Martin Keenan (brave chaps) and over tea we heard about the lunches being hosted jointly by the C of S and the Methodists in this week of Christian Aid.

Jill has a blog and www.mwib.org.uk is a mine of information.

Finally, sincere thanks must go to Jenny Lee for her warm, efficient chairing of the meeting.

MDC

Jim McKean asks

“Is there a moral in this somewhere?”

There is a difference between myth and legend; the frivolous would say that myth is just "Miss" with her front teeth missing, whilst leg-end is the pedal extremity on which you put your shoe. And whilst each of these definitions has merit, there is no escaping the fact that we are mything the pointh.

Take Ulytheth, oopth thorry, Odytheuth. (OK, I've probably made my point!) Now there was someone who managed to be both legendary and mythical. Now, whilst I would wish him luck in his continuing career as a mythical legend, or, if you prefer it, a legendary myth, there's no escaping the fact that the stories of his odyssey are exactly that; stories. Some Greek with more free time than was likely to be good for him sat down and concocted these stories.

Don't get me wrong, as a story writer myself, I appreciate the old stories that have been handed down, we can all learn from those who have gone ahead. Of course, since there is a limit to the number of plots in the whole gamut of human storytelling, it is inevitable that we feel from time to time that every mortal thing has already been done to death. Now all this leads up to my story, which isn't so much a myth or a legend as a parable. For those unfamiliar with the word, parables are interesting little stories that keep the brain engaged at the front door while the deeper meaning sneaks round the back and ambushes the soul, or the conscience. Now, it may be that you have heard a version of this one before, but if so, please sit still and don't try to pinch the punch line. So, are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin.

There was once a man who believed fervently in his maker. And the reason for his fervour was that he had actually realised at a fairly early stage that his maker had created all things from the beginning, which isn't all that easy to do when you think about it; you try it.

Anyway, this man, Alfred Alfblue Andtheothercoloursaren'tvoting, was on a journey. And as he journeyed, he praised his maker for all the beautiful and wonderful things around him, even for every breath he took (I told you he was fervent). However, as is all too often the case with such people, he was so busy praying that he didn't pay enough attention to where he was going. Where he was going, when he lost the plot a bit, was along a very narrow path high on a cliff. This cliff fell sheer for five hundred feet into a rather unpleasant river, which nevertheless had more than its fair share of crocogators, or possibly allidiles; you'll likely know the kind of thing anyway, nasty teeth at one end and a none too pleasant tail at the other. In between is a super-efficient belly with all the requisite organs for rendering down anything unfortunate enough to encounter the teeth.

This river also contained rather more piranhas than one likes to see in the same location, so what with one thing and another, it wasn't the ideal bathing spot. And whilst it may be true that these are all God's creatures, and they have to live too, most sane people prefer not to be the means by which said creatures live.

And so it came to pass that our legendary hero missed his footing and started on a fairly rapid plunge towards oblivion. However, about halfway there, another of God's creations slowed him to a halt. Now, it's not every day one finds reason to praise God for cactus plants; the circumstances have to be right. They were in this case.

But, grateful though our hero was for the abrupt halt to his progress, there was a certain frailty about the plant that suggested the matter of his plunge to oblivion hadn't so much been cancelled as temporarily delayed. This wanted thinking about, which, since his legs and arms had been broken, was pretty much all he could do.

To think is to pray, as my old school motto has it. So our hero prayed thusly. "Oh Lord, you are the maker of all things, even the crocogators or allidiles in the river, to say nothing of the super abundance of piranhas also therein dwelling. I pray to you to show your might and power by rescuing me from the fall which seems to be my fate." And the Lord answered in our hero's head "Yea, verily I will rescue you".

Well, hardly had he spoken the words when a large raft appeared in the river. The crew, quickly sizing up the situation, sculled the raft to the bank and skilfully held it there, urging our hero to roll down. But he refused, saying that God Himself would rescue him. So the raft went away, amidst much muttering.

Scarcely had it gone, when a couple of rock climbers appeared on the scene. They, too offered to help, but they received the same answer. Shrugging, they took their leave.

By one of those coincidences, the local equivalent of the air-sea rescue squad were practising in the area. Spotting our beleaguered hero, they too offered their services, but by now our hero was convinced that God Himself was going to personally rescue him. So firmly was he convinced of this, that he waved the helicopter away.

Hardly had the helicopter disappeared when the cactus gave up the unequal struggle and collapsed, depositing Alfred Alfblue Andtheothercoloursaren'tvoting in the river, where the rather unpleasant denizens thereof made short work of his earthly remains.

But though his body was dead, his soul remained and headed straight for heaven. His soul was miffed; he wanted words with God, and when he encountered Him, he spake thusly; "Lord, I trusted You. You promised that you would rescue me, yet all that is left of my body is in the guts of some of your other creatures. What went wrong?" And thus spake the creator "You tell me: I sent along a raft, a couple of rock climbers, even a helicopter....."



OAK NEWS

Organisation of Aberdeen Kirks

Thank you for all the support in the past year which enabled O.A.K. to donate £9,200 to good causes and send 100 shoeboxes of Christmas Gifts to Eastern Europe.

In February we had a successful Special Lunch in aid of Mercy Ships so your influence is reaching far round the world. On 12th April another special lunch was held with the proceeds going to Mental Health, Aberdeen and FRIENDS, a group who meet weekly at the O.A.K. Cafe. We are now looking forward to our next Special Lunch on 7th June which is in aid of the Cogwheel Trust; O.A.K. has been sponsoring two children at a time through the work of the trust for many years and is now helping a third pair.

As we all think of going on summer holidays O.A.K. reminds us that when we came back Christmas will be just round the corner, so we would like to ask for your help to keep the shoebox appeal going. I know some of our friends are already busy with the knitting needles and we will have a closing date of 1st November for donations.

A big thank you to all the staff who have done extra shifts and all the necessary shopping to keep everything running smoothly for another year.

Our Evening Services continue on the second Sunday of each month at Crown Terrace Methodist Church at 6.30pm where you will find a warm welcome (and a cup of tea!)

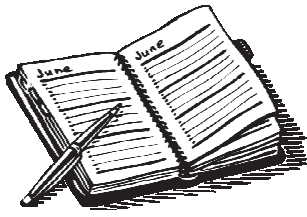
We look forward to seeing you at the Café whenever you are passing or at some of our future events, but in the meantime we hope you all have a good summer break and find the sun.

Betty & Malcolm Steel.

WHAT O.A.K. HAS DONE WITH THE PROFITS IN 2011

RUGUT Project c/o Queen Street	250.00
Scottish Bible Society	1,150.00
Christian Aid	250.00
Palm Sunday Communion (in Hospitality)	220.00
Erskine Hospitals	1,000.00
St. Peter's Church. Accra c/o C.T.M.C.	500.00
Chennai Challenge c/o C.T.M.C.	200.00
Scottish Spina Bifida Association	1,111.00
D.E.C. African Appeal	400.00
Archway	111.00
Biggest Coffee Morning in the World Macmillan Cancer Support	150.00
Aberdeen Cyrenians	1,000.00
Poppy Scotland	250.00
Poppy Scotland (in Hospitality)	88.00
New Hope Trust (Shoobox Transportation)	250.00
Cogwheel Trust	620.00
Homelessness (in Hospitality)	325.00
Presbytery of Aberdeen Malawi Committee (in Hospitality)	325.00
TOTAL	<u>£9,200.00</u>

**A big thank you to all who have helped us in this work
Malcolm Steel, Treasurer**



DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE (if other than CTM) and any other information
Tuesday June 5 th	18.45 for 19.00	Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen	Salvation Army Citadel
Thursday June 7 th	12.00	OAK special lunch in aid of the Cogwheel Trust	OAK café at St Marks
Sunday June 10 th	18.30	OAK Service	
Thursday June 14 th	19.30	Church Council	
Sunday July 8 th	18.30	OAK Service	
Sunday August 12 th	18.30	OAK Service	
Saturday September 1 st	16.00	Circuit service to welcome John McNeill	
Sunday September 9 th	18.30	OAK Service	
Thursday September 13 th	19.30	Ghana Bible Study restarts	48, St Swithin Street the home of Michael & Elsie Dyer
Friday September 28 th	10.30	Women's Fellowship restarts	Room 6
Saturday, October 13 th	15.00	Circuit Meeting	
Saturday October 13 th	19.30	Scottish Bible Society Quiz Night	
Friday - Sunday October 26 th - 28 th		Church weekend away	Pitlochry