



SAINT MARY'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Newsletter

Our Mission Statement:

Saint Mary's is a Christ-centred family, caring, sharing and working together, seeking to change through growth.

October 2015

Dear Friends,

Thanks to the many people who filled out the survey I sent around at the beginning of the summer. It was very helpful for me to get a sense for the joys as well as hopes of the congregation.

The one question on which there was almost universal agreement was the one asking about what needed to improve at St Mary's. Most people responded with growth. In this, we are no different than most churches in the west. I thought I would use this note to offer some reflections on the topic of growth.

First, we have to be careful about why we seek growth. Many of us, myself included, have a lot invested in St Mary's. I'm sure we want to see this place, at which we've spent so much time and dedicated so much of our resources, continue and thrive.

But we should be careful about seeking growth simply for ourselves, to sustain what St Mary's means to us. Growth always means change. New people come in with new manners, with new expectations and with new needs. To respond to them requires adaptation. If we only want to keep this place for ourselves, it will be challenging to embrace growth when it occurs.

Second, we have to be mindful of the purpose of the church. Not everything that grows is good. Cancerous growth is bad. There are many large churches that are unhealthy; they have grown in such a way that they have co-opted the church into something it's not. In order to grow in a healthy

way, the church needs to grow in accordance with its purpose.

What is the purpose of the church? The church, as an institution, does a lot of things – it is a context for friendships, it provides pastoral care, it educates, it partners with charities and other organisations, it maintains a building, it raises money, etc. But the church, most fundamentally, is best understood as a movement, not an institution.



You may know that the scriptural term translated into English as 'Church' derives from the verb, 'to call.' Indeed, the church is variously described as a people called out from the population to devote themselves to God in prayer and praise.

But the church is not only called together to exist in and for itself. The church is also sent out. The reason why worship was once referred to as 'Mass' was because of the Latin term 'missa', from which we get 'dismissal'. After being called to adore God in Christ, people are dismissed, that is, they are sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit to serve their neighbours. Healthy church growth, then, springs from this movement of being called to worship God and sent out to serve one's fellow human being.

The final reflection I have relates to the instructions Jesus gave to his disciples when he sent them out to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God. These instructions can be found in Luke 9.1-6. Jesus tells his disciples that they should not take anything with them on their mission – no bag, no money, no food, not even a change of clothes.

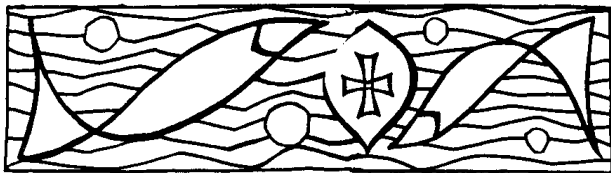
The disciples, in other words, were to go out, not in a state of sufficiency, but in a state of poverty. They had to depend upon the compassion of others. And it was by depending upon the hospitality of others that they were carried to the places God wanted them to be. If they went to a village where no one received them, they were to move on to the next one.

Harvest Festival

How do we allow our needs to carry us to new places? How do we allow our neediness to be a catalyst for connection with those who are strangers to our congregation? How do we move from a place of self-preservation, in which we try on our own to take care of our needs, to a place of mission, in which we aren't concerned with what we don't have, but with what we have to give?

In Christ's peace,

James



Normal weekly services:

Sunday: Holy Eucharist at 8a.m. and 10.15a.m.

Tuesday:
Morning Prayer at 7.45a.m.

Wednesday:
Holy Eucharist at 10a.m.

Thursday:
Morning Prayer at 7.45a.m.

From the Registers:

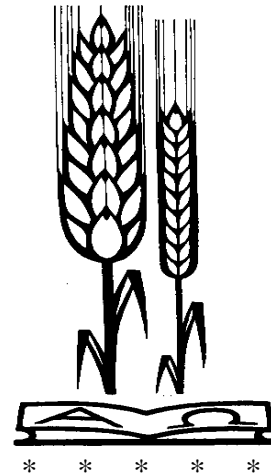
Deaths:
Albert Wren, 23rd. August, 2015.

Pat Raffan, 8th. September, 2015.

May they rest in peace, to rise in glory.

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St. Mary's will celebrate Harvest this year on 4th. October. All gifts to decorate the church and to donate during the service will be very welcome as usual. Preceding the service, at 9a.m., the Rector will give a talk on the Nicene Creed as part of his series of church and faith related talks. All welcome! Tea and coffee provided.



Church and Faith Talks

Following on from the Rector's talk on the Nicene Creed before the Harvest Service, at 9a.m. on Sunday, 18th. October, Dr. Graham Cooper will give a talk between the morning services on the prayers in the Scottish Prayerbook. These are helpful and thought-provoking talks and well worth attending.

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Open 4 Prayer

Our lunchtime services continue to take place, normally on the last Tuesday of the month, aimed at attracting the office workers around us in the West End. This is a lovely pause for fellowship in the day with shared worship and contemplation, and a light lunch to follow. The next service is on 29th. September, at 12.30p.m.

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Barnardo's

After our display of information about the charity Barnardo's on our maternal festival, a representative will be coming to tell us more on 11th. October, letting us know how the emphasis of their current work has changed in response to

the changing needs of the community around us. Perhaps we should fill the box in the porch for them to take away with them!

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Prayers for Healing

The next Prayers of Healing, Wholeness and Strength services will be held on Sunday, 4th. October, at 6p.m. Prayers for Healing will now be held on the first Sunday of every second month. In addition, there are short prayers for healing after each Sunday 10.15 service in the War Memorial Chapel.

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Vestry Report

The vestry has not met since the publication of the last magazine.

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Sunday School

Just the one birthday this month: James Coutts will be fourteen on the 30th. Happy birthday to him!

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Storytime Service

On 27th. September at 6p.m. there will be an outreach event for children and families in the city. Children come to hear stories, sing songs, say prayers and sip hot cocoa. Please consider telling a friend. If you'd be available to help or to prepare cocoa, let the Rector know. This event will occur again on 25th. October.

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Albert Wren

Mabel, Lydia, Ian and the family would like to thank everyone for their cards and expressions of sympathy following the sad loss of Albert and to thank the many who came to pay their respects at his funeral. It was very comforting to see so many of you there. Thank you also to James and Jason for their care at this difficult time and to all those involved in the funeral service.

An Open Letter on Refugees

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are sure that you and your congregations are greatly concerned about the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and the resulting migration of large numbers of people exposed to great hardship, uncertainty and vulnerability. As Christian people, we are called by Christ to respond with compassion and hospitality.

Many in your congregations may be asking what the Church is doing in the face of this crisis. Firstly, as congregations and as individuals, many will have already responded to appeals for help and many churches will be taking up special collections in aid of the refugees. Moreover, following the decision of the UK Government to accept up to 20,000 refugees from Syria over the next five years, representatives from a number of churches across the city met on Thursday 10 September to discuss an ecumenical response, and an invitation was received from Aberdeen City Council to attend a Refugee Planning meeting, along with representatives from the Muslim Community and the Voluntary Sector. Accordingly, Rev. Hugh Wallace, Convenor of the Church and Society Committee of the Aberdeen Presbytery of the Church of Scotland, and Rev. Stuart Chalmers, Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen, as representatives of Aberdeen Churches Together, attended the meeting on 14th September to discuss how the Council, faith groups and the voluntary sector could work together to offer spiritual, emotional and material support to refugees coming to the City and the North East. Reflecting the common consensus at the meeting, all faith community representatives expressed a commitment to welcome and assist the refugees when they arrive.

There is great willingness in our congregations to help in a variety of ways. However, at this point in time, we are waiting for further detail from the UK Government as to who will be resettled in our area and what their specific needs will be. This will then inform a plan of action, shaped by the Council in collaboration with faith groups, charitable organisations and individuals. Congregations will be informed of this plan in due course. In the meantime, offers of help and pledges of financial assistance can be lodged on a new website created jointly by the Scottish

Refugee Council and the Scottish Government:
<http://www.scotlandwelcomesrefugees.scot>

Please continue to pray for the many people of Syria and the neighbouring countries in the Middle East, whose lives have been so deeply affected by the on-going conflict. Pray for the peoples in Europe as refugees make their way into their countries. Let us pray that the values of wisdom, compassion, courage, justice and peace would prevail in this uncertain situation.

Yours in Christ,

Very Rev Dr Stuart P. Chalmers, Vicar General,
Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen

Rev Duncan Eddie, Moderator of Presbytery of
Aberdeen Church of Scotland

Lieutenant Helen Froud, Commanding Salvation
Army Aberdeen Citadel

Rt Rev Bob Gillies, Bishop of Aberdeen and
Orkney

Rev Dr John McNeill Minister Crown Terrace
Methodist Church

Rev Gary Smith, Minister, Crown Terrace Baptist
Church

Terje Stenholt, Port Chaplain Norwegian Church

Rev Stephen Taylor, Minister Kirk of St Nicholas
Uniting, Chairman of Aberdeen Churches
Together

Rev Hugh Wallace, Convenor of the Church and
Society Committee of the Aberdeen Presbytery of
the Church of Scotland

Members of Aberdeen Churches Together

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Doors Open Day

Doors Open Day took place on 12th. September and we had the privilege of welcoming 34 people to our church, most of whom had never seen inside the building before and admired it greatly. The awful weather encouraged our visitors to stay for tea and buns and a chat, too. Very many thanks to all who baked, played music (an unplanned but

excellent accompaniment!) or welcomed visitors on the day.

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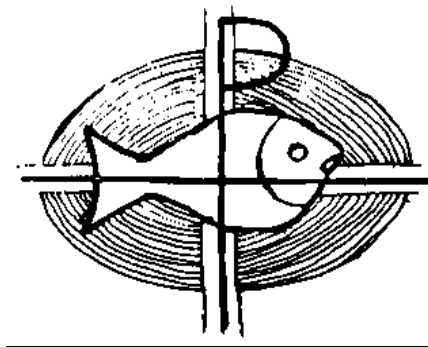
Blytheswood Boxes

It's time to fill those shoeboxes again! Pick up a leaflet in church or ask Morag McPetrie for further information.

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Parking in the Church Grounds

Do you need to park in the Church Grounds? Free permits can be obtained from Mary Allardyce. Please park considerately, and if you can avoid parking during the week it would be very much appreciated.



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Diocesan Communications Day

The Diocesan Communications day planned for **Saturday 3 October** at St Devenick's Church Hall, Bielside, has been postponed to the spring. Further details later!

Mary McKinnell

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Dates for your Diary:

25th. October: Bring and Buy after 10.15 service

8th. November: An old friend of St. Mary's, the Rev. Professor Gordon Graham, will preach and celebrate at the 10.15 service.

13th. November: Cheese and Wine

Children in Church

3-year-old Reese :

'Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name...'

A little boy was overheard praying: 'Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a really good time the way I am.'

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, 'That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you guys.'

One particular four-year-old prayed:
'And forgive us our trash baskets
as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets.'

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, 'And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?' One bright little girl replied, 'Because people are sleeping.'

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. 'If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.' Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, 'Ryan, you be Jesus !'

A father was at the beach with his children when the four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand. 'Daddy, what happened to him?' the son asked. 'He died and went to Heaven,' the Dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, 'Did God throw him back down?'

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, 'Would you like to say the blessing?' 'I wouldn't know what to say,' the girl replied. 'Just say what you hear Mum say,' the mother answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, 'Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?'



In the hospital the relatives gathered in the waiting room, where a family member lay gravely ill. Finally, the doctor came in looking tired and sombre.

'I'm afraid I'm the bearer of bad news,' he said as he surveyed the worried faces. 'The only hope left for your loved one at this time is a brain transplant. It's an experimental procedure, very risky, but it is the only hope. Insurance will cover the procedure, but you will have to pay for the brain.'

The family members sat silent as they absorbed the news. After a time, someone asked, 'How much will a brain cost?'

The doctor quickly responded, '\$5,000 for a male brain; \$200 for a female brain.'

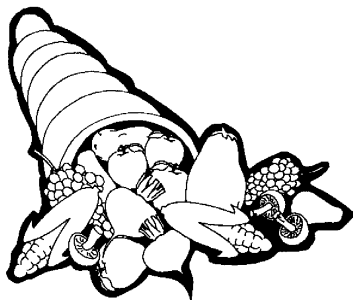
The moment turned awkward. Some of the men actually had to try to not smile, avoiding eye contact with the women. One man, unable to control his curiosity, finally blurted out the question everyone wanted to ask, 'Why is the male brain so much more than a female brain?'

The doctor smiled at the childish innocence and explained to the entire group, 'It's just standard pricing procedure. We have to price the female brains a lot lower because they've been used.'

(anonymous)

Saints' Days in October:

- 1st. St. Gregory the Enlightener
4th. St. Francis of Assisi
8th. Alexander Penrose Forbes, Bishop
11th. St. Kenneth
12th. Elizabeth Fry
15th. St. Teresa of Avila
17th. St. Ignatius of Antioch
18th. St. Luke
19th. Henry Martyn
28th. Ss. Simon and Jude
29th. James Hannington and companions



Your Magazine

You can order your St. Mary's News to be sent to you each month by e-mail, or ask for a Large Print version, or ask for any back copies of editions you may have missed. Just contact the Editor!

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Rector: Rev. Dr. James Merrick (397414)
jmerrick@stmaryscardenplace.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Rev. Jason Hobbs

Rector's Warden: David Rose

People's Warden: Rachael Cormack (209380)

Vestry Secretary: Mary Allardyce (704743)

Vestry Treasurer: Lydia Ross (864072)

Lay Representative: Nicola Mills

Sacristan: Mary Allardyce

Organist: Vacancy

Sunday School: Gillian Rose

LEGO Young Adults Group: Mary
mjmckinnell@gmail.com

Protection of Vulnerable Groups Co-ordinator:
Elizabeth Smyth

Flower Convener: Lucy Fleming

Church Administrator: Avril Scott (561383)
Tuesdays 8 - 11a.m.,
Fridays 1.30 - 4.30p.m.
office@stmaryscardenplace.org.uk

Website: www.stmaryscardenplace.org.uk

Follow us on Facebook at
[facebook.com/stmaryscardenplace](https://www.facebook.com/stmaryscardenplace)

All copy for the November magazine must be with the Editor by 19th.October, 2015. Hard copy to Nicola Mills, or telephone 01224 488700, or e-mail to palaeography@aol.com. Thank you!

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Carden Place, is a charity (Scottish Charity No. SCO 14062).