

DioceSan News

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Verse fit for a plinth

A PRIEST from the diocese spent an hour on Trafalgar Square's fourth plinth last month reading poetry.

Revd Bryan Owen, associate priest at St James the Less Bishopbriggs, successfully bid to become part of Antony Gormley's One and Other art installation.

Best known for his Angel of the North sculpture, the artist is devoting three months to the creation of living statues - 2,400 of them, in fact.

Each successful volunteer is given an hour on the plinth, with places allocated by ballot.

Former teacher Bryan read verse from his first book of poetry, *Blue Daffodils*, and his forthcoming *A Sprinkling of Stars*. Ahead of his 9am performance on 13 August, he said: "I want to use my hour to celebrate

tolerance and diversity in our world and I want to use the cameras to include all those who are watching around the world!

"I will especially read a poem for Aung San Suu Kyi and the people of Burma and I hope the message will filter through that she hasn't been forgotten.

"I hope everyone will continue to support all the arts – it is our protest against the dumbing down of society, our protest against the bean-counters who know the price of everything but the value of nothing, and it is our protest against those who want to crush the human spirit."

Bryan is about to make one of his twice-yearly visits to the United States at the end of this month to perform his work and lead writing workshops.

Bryan's plinth performance can be viewed online at oneanother.co.uk by navigating to his time slot on 13 August. For more about his poetry and his other work visit bryanowen.com.

Christian studies course launched

STUDY groups in the south of the diocese will be the first to benefit from the launch of a series of lay theological courses this autumn.

The Certificate in Christian Studies modules derive from York St John's University, the validating body for our Theological Institute (TISEC).

Participants will meet in five groups in the Galloway Region for 10 hours of discussion time per module.

The sessions will be facilitated by local clergy and readers. As well as the group work, participation on the course requires individuals to set aside a fair amount of time for reading in preparation for these sessions.

The first module, Using the Bible, aims to enable exploration of traditional and contemporary ways of reading biblical texts using the tools of scholarship.

It covers: Origins and translation of the biblical texts; Critical approaches to Old and New Testament studies; Historical, literary and reader-centred approaches to biblical studies; Reading in different contexts and from different per-

spectives; Applying critical skills to bible reading.

Completing the course should enable students to use a particular critical approach to analysing given texts; understand and explain Jewish and Christian approaches to Hebrew Scriptures; and evaluate the usefulness of critical methods of biblical study in church contexts.

Subsequent options include: The New Testament; The Old Testament; and Living Theology.

Every participant will receive a copy of the core text plus a workbook. There is a £30 charge per module to cover course material.

If you are interested in taking part now or later, contact ministry development officer Anne Tomlinson (mdo.gg@btinternet.com).

Also in this issue . . .

Getting into mission shape—an introduction

New cash to help churches fighting poverty

Architect's worldwide warning after roof fall

Mural mystery solved after 50 years

Events, opportunities and courses

New training offered in pastoral care

A FIVE-session course in pastoral care is now on offer to those who are called to the authorised ministry of pastoral assistant and others who are interested in developing their pastoral care skills.

Written particularly for the Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway, this course can be delivered within your home congregation (no need to travel) by someone - clergy or lay - who has expertise in pastoral care and group facilitation skills. The sessions cover: The core skill of listening; The core skill of communicating; Visiting in the name of the church; Good practice for visitors; and Dealing with loss.

More information from ministry development officer Anne Tomlinson (mdu.gg@btinternet.com).

Roof-fall alert

A CHURCH'S entire tower roof crashed inside the building just months after the congregation held their final service there.

The dramatic collapse could have been disastrous had there been anyone beneath.

But fortunately the congregation had already flitted and removed the fine carvings and furniture.

Members of St John's Episcopal Church in Girvan had worshipped in the stone building for around 150 years until last November. They now share premises with the town's Methodist church – the only one in Ayrshire.

Diocesan architect Rebecca Cadie says the roof fall was discovered during a regular check in April.

Now she has posted details of the incident on the web to alert other churches to the danger of timber rot.

Rebecca explained: "Two years before the closure, the congregation had obtained specialist survey reports highlighting the wet and dry rot evidence in the tower roof over the chancel, and recommending £30,000 remedial treatment.

"The probable rot conditions had been identified eight years earlier in the quinquennial inspection report but had not been further investigated or treated, due to the funds available to the very small congregation.

"The church is not listed and did not attract interested grant funders and so members sadly accepted they could not continue to occupy a building with a major defect."

The traditional solid-stone building was designed for more than 200 worshippers. Though it was originally meant to have a spire, the tower was finished with a flat roof.

'CATASTROPHIC'

Rebecca said: "It is fortunate the congregation had taken the decision to move as, without warning, there was a catastrophic collapse of the tower roof into the chancel.

"The weather was not extreme, but there had been several weeks with heavy showers and it is apparent the rainwater outlets were so blocked that the roof was retaining a quantity of water inside the parapet.

"The perimeter parapet gutter timbers were weak with rot and gave way under the weight, breaking cleanly away from the tower stonework and falling in as an intact plane of roof."

Before the fall, there had been little evidence of the fungus on the visible underside of the wood.

Steeplejacks have removed a few loosened stones at the top of the tower wall and structurally the tower is sound – but roofless.

The property is to be marketed as a development opportunity and meantime is, in Rebecca's words, "very well ventilated".

She has highlighted the incident on a church maintenance website, and is warning other churches: "Ignore rot reports at your peril."

Pictures of the fallen roof can be seen on maintainyourchurch.org.uk.

Looking at Luke

TO prepare for preaching on the Gospel of Luke in Year C, the diocese has organised a study day on the book led by Revd Professor John Riches.

This will take place in All Saints, Drymen Road, Bearsden on Saturday 7 November, 11am–3pm.

The day will include formal input from John on the shape and context of the Gospel in the morning, followed by participative contextual Bible study in the afternoon.

All clergy and readers are welcome.

Participants should bring a packed lunch; tea and coffee will be available.

Register with the ministry development officer (0131 668 1322 or e-mail mdu.gg@btinternet.com).

Marriage and co-habitation

ISSUES surrounding relationships in the 21st century are the topic of a one-day Mothers' Union workshop on Saturday 12 September in St John's Dumfries, 10am – 2.30pm.

'Marriage and cohabitation: the same or different?' is for all church members, family and friends.

Leading the day will be MU chaplain Revd Scott Robertson.

Four sessions will cover the history of marriage and cohabitation; the biblical context; present-day perceptions; and the law in relation to marriage and cohabitation.

Tell Carolynne Sorrell (01387 255798, cmsorrell@aol.com) if you are coming so that organisers can plan catering, and let her know if you would like a crèche.

Lunch is free.

The MU will be holding a similar event in Glasgow on Saturday 27 February.

Another world is possible – get inspired and get involved!

THAT'S the theme of World Development Movement Scotland's national conference on Saturday 19 September (10.30am-5pm).

Among speakers are film-maker Mike Bonanno (The Yes Men Fix the World); Benito Bonilla (Accion Ecologica, Ecuador); David Miller (Spinwatch); and WDM director Deborah Doane.

Sessions include Global justice in an age of crisis; What is climate justice? Practical activism; Exploiting the media; Economic alternatives from the global south.

The venue is St Augustine Church, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh. More details on wdmscotland.org.uk.

In brief: news and events . . .

HOW to think about the Bible and science without getting in a twist' is one of the topics at a conference for non-stipendiary clergy.

Physicist Professor Wilson Poon will be leading two sessions under the heading 'Real scientist, real faith' over the meeting in Renfrew on 4-5 September.

His opening session will cover 'Hide and seek - the cross in the laboratory'.

THE Dean, Very Revd Gregor Duncan, will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of his ordination as priest at St Ninian's Pollokshields on Wednesday 23 September at 7.30pm. He asks for your prayers.

SWEDISH choir Canbrah, from the Dalstorp Pastorate, will give a concert on Saturday 19 September in St Ninian's Church, Bentinck Drive, Troon, at 7pm and take part in the 10.30am service the following day.

THE third season of Sunday afternoon concerts at St Margaret's, 353 Kilmarnock Road, Newlands, gets under way on Sunday 13 September with a recital by baritone Edward Caswell and pianist Walter Blair.

They will perform music by Gerald Finzi and others. Concerts are at 3.30pm and last under an hour. Contact the church on 0141 636 1131.

THE Journey in Faith training series has a new unit, Worship and the Arts, commencing 1 September. The course will run for five Tuesdays at Holy Trinity and St Barnabas, Paisley, 7.30-9pm. To book, contact Revd Gordon Fyfe, convener of Education Action (gordonfyfe@virginmedia.com).

THE institution of Revd Kirstin Freeman takes place on Saturday 19 September at All Saints Bearsden at 2pm. Please remember Kirstin and her congregation in your prayers and the people of St Mark's East Kilbride as they prepare for the vacancy and the search for a new priest. Clergy attending the institution should wear a green stole.

ST Columba's Largs has another of its popular car boot sales on Saturday 5 September. Gates open at 9am for sellers and 10am for buyers until 1pm. Car pitches are £6, tables £2, vans £10. To book call 01475 686213. Refreshments and home-made soup and rolls will be served.

THE World Council of Churches (WCC) is inviting applications from people aged 18-30 to serve as interns in its Geneva offices from February 2010 to January 2011.

The interns will be assigned to one of the WCC working areas. Each is expected to plan an ecumenical project to implement back home.

The closing date is 30 September. For details on how to apply contact wccinterns@gmail.com.

A WORKSHOP on using Reserved Sacrament that was to be held in Stranraer on 19 September has been postponed due to commitments elsewhere in the diocese on that day.

News of the rescheduled event will be posted on the diocesan website: glasgow.anglican.org.

Mural mystery

THE mystery creator of a church mural has been found after 50 years.

The artwork on the west wall of St Bartholomew's in Gourrock bore no signature.

It depicted various biblical figures, including Bartholomew himself. Although enquiries had been made no-one remembered the name of the artist.

Then the local paper stepped in.

People's warden Iris Jubber takes up the tale: "The Greenock Telegraph has helped us tremendously during the last month with our fundraising efforts and when they heard of our search for the artist they published an article and photograph. There was great excitement when this immediately resulted in a telephone call from a Mr Charles Murray who explained he was the artist and he asked if it would be possible for him to see the mural.

"Of course! He arrived from Rothesay the next day with his wife and two friends.

"He explained the mural had been painted in his final year at art school in 1958/9."

Iris says: "Due to the porous state of the stone work behind the mural we knew it had to be taken down. "Mr Murray explained it was painted on 8'x4' boards and if we could find the joins it would be an easy task to remove it.

"Because of dampness it is not worth keeping. "But he and his wife would like to have part of it as a keepsake, and maybe their two daughters would be interested too.

"Once again the local press have been a great help."

New cash for churches tackling poverty

GRANTS of up to £15,000 are now on offer specifically to faith groups tackling poverty in their neighbourhood.

At the launch of the Faiths in Scotland Community Action Fund (FiSCAF) convener Sandra Carter announced a programme offering cash packages worth as much as £15,000 over three years which faith groups can use to develop anti-poverty projects that improve the quality of life in local communities.

She said: "All over Scotland many faith groups play a big part in making their communities better places to live. We want to see more of them involved in the struggle against poverty. This new fund will encourage people to take small steps which can make a huge difference."

The Fund is an initiative of anti-poverty organisation Faith in Community (Scotland). It encourages applications from locally based faith groups in Scotland which wish to undertake prac-

tical action in response to community need, particularly in the economically poorest urban and rural communities.

In its first year the Fund will award £150,000. The aim is to increase this to £500,000 over the next four years. The next round of awards is in November and applications must be received by 30 September.

For details call Sandra Carter (07531 696240) or Iain Johnston, operations director of Faith in Community (Scotland), on 0141 221 4576.

Mission-shaped intro course

MISSION-Shaped Intro is a course that promises to help 'rediscover mission and re-imagine church' in six weekly sessions.

Our world and our lives have changed radically in the last 20 years, but has the church adapted to this change? The aim of this course, designed by Anglican/Methodist initiative Fresh Expressions, is to explore the 'why' of creating fresh expressions of church rather than the 'how'.

Organisers say it is suitable for clergy and lay people alike, and could alternatively be used as a Lent course. Participants may go on to take part in a Mission-Shaped Ministry course starting in January.

Mission-Shaped Intro sessions run on Wednesday evenings, 2 September to 7 October, at Renfield St Stephen's Church Centre, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow.

To book, call 0141 954 6568 or email msi@whiteinchurch.org.

To find out more about the course content, visit freshexpressions.org.uk.

Trident plea

IN his role as the SEC's Church in Society Committee convener Revd Ian Barcroft has written to the Prime Minister urging the Government to reconsider proceeding with a Trident replacement.

Ian, who is rector of St Mary's Hamilton, says in the letter: "It is very difficult to defend the possession of weapons of mass destruction with a conditional intent to use them in terms of traditional Christian teaching."

His message has been endorsed by the College of Bishops, who themselves have written to Gordon Brown in support of the concerns expressed by Ian.

Poverty action week

CHURCH Action on Poverty has set a date for next year's Poverty and Homelessness Action Week: 30 January to 7 February.

Its theme, Enough for All, is inspired by Acts 4.35: "There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold."

The resource materials, free to download, include ideas like assessing your community assets; and a 'justice fair' with local organisations sharing ideas for a fairer, more sustainable society.

Visit actionweek.org.uk.

Moves and new appointments

REVD Scott Robertson has been appointed Diocesan Director of Ordinands as the Revd David Mungavin is taking up a post in Ireland and will be leaving the diocese in August.

REVD Gordon Fyfe has been appointed convener of Education Action for the Diocese, replacing Linda Whitby.

MRS Anne Jones has been appointed Child Protection Officer for the Diocese. Her contact details are 43 Rowallan Gdns, Glasgow G11 7DH (0141 579 1617).

ALL Property Committee matters should go to Canon David Bayne as acting convener during the vacancy.

No blue wave for green marchers

ORGANISERS of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland's next Glasgow march will be modelling plans on the climate event in London on the same day (Saturday 5 December).

Mysteriously, though, they won't be copying its Wave theme, with demonstrators dressed in blue and waving blue-painted hands in the air 'till they're blue in the face'.

Wonder why!

Whether you're a blue-sky thinker or you've green leanings, you can get more details about December's march – timed to send a message to world leaders at the Copenhagen Climate Summit – by e-mailing gail@stopclimatechaosscotland.org.

Volunteer stewards will be especially welcome.

The Mothers' Union and Scottish Episcopal Church are both members of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland.

Next issue . . .

ITEMS for the October issue may be submitted by **Monday 14 September** in prose text (not leaflets, adverts, posters or PDFs, please) to the editor, Susi Cormack Brown:

dns@episcopalglasgow.co.uk, or c/o the Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH.

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