

Cottrell, Bishop of Reading; Annabel Goldie MSP; and Revd Erik Cramb. Details from the SEC website.

THE Walsingham Festival for the Feast of the Annunciation takes place 28 March. It is an afternoon of devotion and celebration from noon until 4pm at Holy Trinity & Saint Barnabas, St James' Place, Paisley, with Stations of the Cross, Liturgy of Healing and Sung Eucharist.

The preacher is Fr Gordon Fyfe, Rector of St Paul & St John the Evangelist, Monklands. Bring a packed lunch (drinks provided).

This year's Scottish pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham is 16-19 October. The cost is £220. Contact Sandra Fowles 01505 844865 or Fr Darren McFarland 01505 812359 or visit walsinghamanglican.org.uk. Places are limited.

MUSIC DAY HITS THE RIGHT NOTE

THERE was a very good attendance for Education Action Network's Music, Chants and Choices workshop on 31 January in Greenock, writes convenor LINDA WHITBY.

Our speakers were brilliant: Revd Darren McFarland, Ian McCrorie, Revd Anne Tomlinson and Frikki Walker. Grateful thanks go to them all for being inspiring, amusing and revealing about troubles in the pews and choir stalls.

They made us aware of our wonderful heritage and tradition, the varied modern music and words around today and how to manage where there is no choir or musical instrument in the church. We tried new words to old tunes and old words to new tunes – great fun and very enjoyable. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Our May workshop will be 'Pray it with Flowers'. More details soon.

Next issue . . .

ITEMS for the April issue may be submitted by **Monday 16 March** 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 Pl, Glasgow G1 2DH.

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WANT to brush up your presentation skills?

The Diocesan Information and Communications Network would like to hear from you if a workshop over one or two Saturdays would be useful for situations such as...

- ◇ *Discussing your faith journey;*
- ◇ *Pitching for a grant;*
- ◇ *Delivering an annual report;*
- ◇ *Addressing a public meeting;*
- ◇ *Briefing a project team.*

Please email the Network via dns@episcopalglasgow.co.uk to register interest.

Glasgow & Galloway

Diocesan News

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THREE WEDDING FAIRS AND...

'ARE you the bride? Where will you be getting married? Would you consider a church wedding?'

Last month, when the Scottish Episcopal Church took part in the Scottish Wedding Show at Ingliston, Ayr's Holy Trinity had a stand at another two-day wedding exhibition at Ayr Racecourse.

It was our congregation's first foray into the marriage industry marketplace. Within days we had an invitation to exhibit at a smaller wedding show the following Sunday at the town's Horizon Hotel.

Both events proved a worthy experiment and a great learning experience, even though many visitors had booked their venue already.

Many had started their families already too. Convoys of baby buggies rolled past us – their passengers often feasting stickily on kebabs from the chocolate fountain stand.

At first, people were taken aback to see a church in the marketplace. But on reflection they admired our enterprise and the intention behind it. To the press, we were a compelling novelty. A red-top journalist rang up for details. We got a half-page write-up in our local paper too. That exposure

alone resulted in a booking ahead of our first exhibition.

Our stand team was three congregation members plus rector Ian Meredith. We took the initiative to engage with visitors, listening more than telling, stewarding our time and theirs thoughtfully. I think we would have made any sales manager proud.

The stand looked attractive and businesslike. It inspired confidence

Inside this month . . .

Tour the Holy Land with Bishop Idris this year

What can Back to Church Sunday do for your church?

Overseas links—taking a wider view

Conferences and events

in us and the people we wanted to trust us with their big day. Big photos of the buildings (Holy Trinity and our smaller sister church, St Oswald's in Maybole) took a trick. Many visitors loved the idea of being married in such a beautiful setting.

Most were surprised to find how affordable our rates are. Small wonder: this is a high-budget business. One exhibitor was offering a backdrop of white voile drapes with fairy lights to hire for the 'special' price of £275 – almost twice our fee!

It came home to us that church weddings are going out of fashion. It will not be long before few couples planning their nuptials will have attended a friend's wedding other than in a hotel or registry office.

That, too, is an opportunity, though. Couples who opt for a Christian ceremony in a non-church venue will at least have opened themselves (and their guests) to an encounter with a church leader who can command their undivided attention as they commit to a lifelong adventure. That moment may help them view their marriage not as an event but a daily sacrament.

The two exhibitions have brought us three bookings so far, slightly more than we needed to cover the cost.

But was it unseemly for a church to set out its stall in the marketplace?

With hindsight, I'd say it's something we should have done before now.

We went out and engaged with people by starting with their agenda, not ours. We got noticed, and in a positive light.

We capitalised on our assets like attractive architecture. I think the good stewards in the parable of the talents might have done the same.

We broke the ice and dispelled some myths with people who had the impression they weren't entitled to make their vows in church. For some, the gratitude for that discovery was almost palpable. Those couples would not have risked the humiliation of rejection by taking the initiative to ask.

If one encounter stood out for me, it was the mum we stopped who admitted she wasn't keen on a church wedding, but her partner might be. As we chatted, though, she began warming to the idea.

When she wondered, unprompted, if her toddler could be baptised too, it wasn't down to clever sales talk on our part.

All we'd done was open the opportunity for her to ask for something her heart already wanted.

Susi Cormack Brown

News and events in brief . . .

THE 2009 Diocesan Synod for Glasgow & Galloway will be held on Saturday 28 February in the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, starting 10am. Registration from 9am.

WAVERLEY Care's 'Come and Sing' is a workshop conducted by John Rutter at Wellington Church, Glasgow, 28 March, 11am-5pm. It includes Rutter's 'Look to the day' and 'Mass of the Children' and Haydn's 'The Heavens are Telling'. Cost £13.50 (£9.50 conc). Registration form from waverleycare.org or 0131 226 2206.

ABOOK sale takes place for Christian Aid on Saturday 28 March at St Ninian's, 1 Albert Drive, Pollokshields, 10am-1am. Contact Rosemary on 0141-637 8324.

THE Scottish Episcopal Church is looking for volunteers to help at the Rural Churches Stand at this year's Royal Highland Show, 25-29 June. E-mail m.robb@carroglen.com.

THE Archbishop of Southern Africa, the Most Revd Thabo Makoba, requests a day of prayer throughout the Anglican Communion for the people of Zimbabwe. Bishop Idris asks that you include Zimbabwe in your prayers on Ash Wednesday.

ST Margaret's Talents hosts an art exhibition, 7-22 March, with original works for sale, including paintings, prints, textiles, photos and cards. It opens with wine and cheese on Satur-

day 7 March at 7.30pm. Visit St Margaret's, 353 Kilmarnock Road, Glasgow.

THE Arts Chaplaincy in Scotland with the Actor's Church Union in Scotland is presenting a conference titled 'The Drama of the Passion' in Perth Concert Hall on Saturday 21 March. Spaces are limited. Contact Revd Ann Mazur at ann@mazur.org.uk.

HOLY Trinity Kilmarnock will host a Tuesday gardeners' club for four weeks from 10 March. It's aimed at all levels and will cover a wide range of topics from 7.30pm to 9.30pm.

PROFESSOR J McKillop gives a lecture with discussion on 'Limitations to Scientific Research: Moral Imperative or Inappropriate Restriction?' at St Mary's Bridge Of Weir, Monday 30 March, 7.30pm as part of the church's centenary events.

ELSHIESHIELDS Tower, Lochmaben, hosts an introduction to silent prayer over three Saturdays in Lent, beginning 28 February, 10-11.30am. Attend one or more. Contact Ann (ann.shukman@virgin.net) 01387 810280 or Louise on 07919204300.

THE next Provincial Conference for the Scottish Episcopal Church will take place 2-4 October in Aviemore. The theme is Living Well: Proclaim, Discover, Respond. The underpinning Bible narrative is the 'Woman at the Well' (John 4:3-43).

Key speakers are Rt Revd Stephen

Making more of international links

HAS your congregation any overseas connections? Would you be interested in visiting our companion dioceses?

If so please let us know what you have been doing, and come to an exciting conference on 21 March, writes *GILL YOUNG, Companion Dioceses Action Network convenor.*

PATHWAY TO PRAYER

PATHWAY to Prayer is an annual ecumenical day in Troon exploring our relationship with God through prayer.

This year it's on Saturday 28 March, 10.15am-4.30pm, at St Meddan's and Portland Church halls.

Participants choose three out of the following sessions.

Revd Ann Shukman: Praying with icons; Fr Stephen Motroni: Singing the prayers of the Psalms; Deaconess Chris King: Praying when God is silent; Sr Isabel Smyth: Insights into prayer from other faiths; Deaconess Muriel Wilson: Immersing ourselves in the love of God; Mrs Barbara McCulloch: Prayer junctions for intercessory prayer.

Lunch will be provided. You may book your place and workshops in advance or choose on the day. For a booking form and more details contact Chris King, 01563 851197.

Our diocese has many international links, personal, congregational and diocesan, both within the Anglican Communion and beyond, particularly through our ecumenical covenant with the diocese of Gothenburg.

Companion relationships with Byumba in Rwanda and Kentucky in the USA continue at regional and congregational levels. Clergy have visited Kentucky and a group from Kentucky spent time in Glasgow at the end of last year. Our friendship with Byumba is maintained through prayer, finance, emails and phone calls. Mutual visits form the mainstay of these relationships. Plans are afoot for various exchanges.

Hosted in Glasgow by the Provincial Overseas Committee, the conference will examine how we can develop our Companion Links. *Companions Together Worldwide: a day for exploring Companion Links*, will feature stories, challenges and the way forward for your church.

Speakers include Revd Canon Edgar Ruddock and Stephen Lyon. Pastor Elson from Byumba. Presentations from the MU and other dioceses will also share experiences of Companion Links.

If you are interested in attending or helping, or want to share what you are doing, please get in touch.

It's on Saturday 21 March, 10am-3:30pm, in the Albany Centre (off Woodlands Road). Coffee from 9:30am. Lunch provided.

A registration form can be found at companionstogether.org.uk, or you can contact me on 0141 332 2160, (info@companionstogether.org.uk).

Holy Land tour with the Bishop

A PILGRIMAGE through Israel and Palestine will be led by Bishop Idris in November.

It is designed to introduce people to the places associated with the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, and to let them meet members of Christians communities in Palestine and Israel today.

Bishop Idris says:

"As we visit the Galilee, we will explore the principal sites of Jesus' ministry around Capernaum and his home town of Nazareth – and whilst there meet Anglican Christians involved in running a most remarkable church school in this predominantly Muslim town.

"In Bethlehem, as well as visiting the Church of the Nativity, we will visit a modern-day neonatal hospital run by Roman Catholic Christians, and a college and cultural centre that is the

pioneering work of a Lutheran Pastor.

"In Jerusalem, as we trace the steps of Jesus along the Via Dolorosa to the place of his death and resurrection, we will also worship alongside the local Palestinian Anglican community.

"By coming on this pilgrimage you will have a chance to support many local Christians in the Holy Land.

"Accommodation and other local provisions are in the hands of well-established Christian companies, and the investment that this pilgrimage represents will play its small part in helping sustain the 'living stones' that help keep this land holy today."

The dates are 9-19 November.

Tour cost is £1,559 including return flight from Glasgow and half-board (some single rooms are available at a supplement).

Full details are available online from Lightline Pilgrimages (lightline.org.uk).

MAKE A MOTHER'S DAY

Mothers' Union again is highlighting its work with mothers and carers facing adversity, through its Make a Mother's Day virtual gifts with Mothering Sunday cards.

Gifts include a £28 birthing kit, a place on an MU literacy circle, plants, livestock and latrines.

Supporters can also choose a gift in memory of their mother.

Last year the campaign raised £159,000 to help mothers, and carers of vulnerable and bereaved children. Visit www.makeamothersday.org. Order by 13 March to ensure delivery before Mothering Sunday, 22 March.

Getting more from your press opportunities

TRAINING in media relations may be arranged by the Diocesan Information and Communications Network if there is enough demand.

A course over one or two Saturdays could cover subjects such as writing effective press releases and making the most of media opportunities.

To register interest, e-mail dns@episcopalglasgow.com with some details about the topics and skills you'd like to work on.

Come as you are – back to church

Darren McFarland explains how this year's Back to Church Sunday will work here in the west...

BACK to Church Sunday is an initiative to rekindle churchgoing primarily amongst people who have, for whatever reason, stopped going to church.

At the heart of Back to Church Sunday is the invitation from one person to another.

It is held on the last Sunday of September each year. For a lot of people in the west of Scotland this is a problem as it is often a holiday weekend. So it has been agreed that churches in Glasgow & Galloway can choose the Sunday before, while at the same time staying prepared for newcomers on the Sunday that's advertised nationally.

Back to Church Sunday began in the Manchester Diocese in 2004 and in the

last four years has grown exponentially. Last year, 37,000 people returned to church on Back to Church Sunday. Of those, 31,000 were Anglicans.

In all, around 3,000 churches took part – inspired by Tearfund research that recently revealed three million people (six per cent of the adult population) would come back to church if they received a personal invitation. Research by the Diocese of Lichfield after last year's Back to Church Sunday showed that, six months after the event, between 12 and 15 per cent of 'returners' had become regular members.

Why has Back to Church Sunday been such a success?

PERSONAL

Two factors seem significant.

The first is the basic methodology of personal invitation.

At the beginning of September participating congregations will begin thinking about who they will invite to join them. In prayer, they will commit those people and themselves to God's care as they make their preparations for welcoming people.

They will focus upon a wholehearted acceptance of people and offer a welcome which is genuine and appropriate to each individual congregation's context.

Back to Church Sunday produces resources to enable congregations in this process.

Each year has its own theme which is

used on prayer cards, invitation cards, balloons, fairly-traded T-shirts and worship resources. This year's theme is 'Come as you are'.

All the resources are produced in partnership with Traidcraft which sponsors Back to Church Sunday.

The second factor is having a designated Sunday.

Research has shown that people are more comfortable coming back to church if they know that there are going to be other people 'just like them' there too that Sunday. Back to Church Sunday provides that more comfortable opportunity which is ripe for using as a

good news story in local and national media.

Back to Church Sunday will have been launched at Diocesan Synod and information will be available from the diocesan clergy about a short training event at the beginning of March.

If you are interested in being involved or think you might have missed out on information please contact me at rector@paisley2.freeserve.co.uk or on 01505 812359. For further information about Back to Church Sunday visit backtochurch.co.uk.

Revd Darren McFarland is secretary to the diocesan Mission Core Group.

Make your voice heard where it counts

Do you want to make your voice heard by people in power?

Do you want to influence decisions made by the council, Scottish Government, Westminster, the health service or other bodies that affect your community?

Have you started to campaign for change and want advice on how to get to the next level?

If so, this month's Sheila McKechnie Foundation campaign workshop in Glasgow is for you.

The day will provide: insight into the 'keys to success'; sessions on key steps in planning and evaluating a campaign; and the chance to consult experienced campaigners, MPs and journalists.

The workshop is for individuals and voluntary organisations and will be held on Friday 20 March at the Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (LTCAS), Venlaw Building, 349 Bath Street.

Places are limited. Fee is £10 per

individual, which covers lunch and refreshments. Contact Ruby Coote: ruby.coote@sheilamckechnie.org.uk or 020 7770 7852.

Glasgow Chamber Choir and Orchestra

(director Michael Bawtree)

BACH

Cantatas, motets and a mass

*Christ lag in Todesbanden
Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen
Missa Brevis in G minor
Komm, Jesu, komm
Der Geist hilft*

Saturday 21 March, 7.30pm
Hyndland Parish Church

Sunday 22 March, 7pm
Holy Trinity, Fullarton Street, Ayr

Tickets £10 (£6 conc) on the door.

BISHOP'S LENTEN APPEAL

THE Bishop's Lenten Appeal this year is for Aquaboxes.

Run by Rotary International, Aquaboxes are a fast and economical way to deliver water purification supplies to communities at risk of water-borne disease.

They have been used extensively in disaster areas.

Cash raised will be passed to Rotary to buy Aquaboxes.

Rotarians in our congregations may be able to arrange a speaker and/or additional publicity.

Visit aquabox.org/project.asp for more information.