

Diocesan News

ISSUE 95: MAY 2010

A chance to change the rules

THIS issue of Diocesan News comes out in the run-up to the first UK General Election in five years.

So it's timely to take stock of how we, as Christians, choose to be stewards of our voting power. It is a seriously under-rated privilege, yet it would have seemed an asset of immense value to those who first heard Jesus' parable of the talents ('to the third servant he gave a chance to change the rules...').

Whether we have any party allegiance or none, we all have a major opportunity now to make candidates listen a little more acutely when we tell them what we want done for the sake of peace, justice and loving kindness.

We can lobby politicians on our doorsteps, at their surgeries, and in writing. We can go to hustings meetings and let them know who will hold them to account if they get into power.

Using our democratic leverage doesn't need to stop when the polling booths close either. Our freedom to put our views to those who govern gives us a continuing right – and responsibility – to speak up for those who have no voice.

'Ethics Election'

Faith think-tank Ekklesia is calling for this to be an 'Ethics Election'. In the following pages you'll find articles about some of the election issues that matter from the perspective of the Mothers' Union, Companion Dioceses, Church in Society, and our Stewardship Action Network. It makes thought-provoking reading. I hope it will stimulate prayer and action too.

Whoever is voted into power has tough choices in store. Radio4's Moneybox newsletter reported last month that the UK's debt is expected to pass the £1trillion mark by the end of the coming year. So in 2011/12 the UK will have borrowed an estimated £24,333 for each of its 45million adult citizens. And that doesn't even take account of personal debt! Tackling our debt burden—the figure is expected to grow by half as much again within five years—without cutting aid or services to those in need is a tall order. It will be no easier re-stimulating our economy without breaking our vital Climate Change pledges. Inevitably there will be cuts, sacrifices and hardship cases. We'll see the effects among our own neighbours here in our diocese.

And that's the perfect storm in which our new Bishop, Gregor Duncan, takes office following his consecration on 23 April.

Theologian Karl Barth told *Newsweek* magazine: "I always pray for the sick, the poor, journalists, authorities of the state and the Church – in that order." Whatever order you choose, please do include Bishop Gregor in your prayers as he enters this new ministry among us.

Susi Cormack Brown, editor

Shack from scrap for rural church's garden

A MAKE-SHIFT shack has proved an arresting centre-piece in one church garden this year.

The thought-provoking shelter has attracted much attention from residents and visitors as they pass by the Easter garden at St Mary's in Gatehouse of Fleet.

The church's Denis Samways explains the background to the initiative: "The idea for having a shack or a shelter came to us during our Lent course, which centred on the meaning of the Cross of Christ. One of the sessions was about the suffering of thousands of children in our world.

"A member of our congregation, Robin Dean, is involved with a charity which helps street children in the cities of India, and is well aware how so many live.

"We built the shack from scrap materials, just like the ones in which so many urban poor live out their lives.

"Against the background of the three crosses in the small churchyard and with some poignant messages on the railings, it has been an apt reminder of the suffering of so many these days."

Also in this issue . . .

Good stewardship at election time

Bishop David calls on voters to reject Trident weapon replacement

Mother love in the polling booth

A manifesto for trade justice

Kirk says no to Hunterston coal station

Resources for voting Christians

Mother love in the polling booth

Ann Glenesk tells us about an MU wish-list for Westminster . . .

THE Mother's Union has identified the following issues as priorities for consideration prior to voting at the General Election:

- ◇ Commercialisation and sexualisation of young people and adults;
- ◇ Family life and work;
- ◇ Gender equality;
- ◇ International development;
- ◇ Marriage and relationships.

The society we live in can be judged by how individuals treat one another and by how individuals are treated by those with power and authority.

Evidence is available that the lives of young people, especially (but not only) those who lack the love and support of parents and a community, are negatively affected by the images and sounds that bombard their senses.

The exploitative strategies directed towards the young by the

mass media, and particularly the fashion, beauty, diet, music and advertising industries, are contributing to a raft of consequences such as eating disorders, depression, body image disturbances and low self esteem.

The images which depict females in submissive poses further undermine the confidence of young women and encourage young men to embrace aggressive behaviour. The consumption of such stimuli makes the development of healthy relationships which demand mutuality a much prized outcome, rather than the norm.

While the young cannot be fully protected from noxious elements there is a need for a two-pronged approach; one to equip young people to be media-literate and develop the ability to decipher the techniques and strategies used by corporate businesses to get their

money and also influence how they live and feel about themselves. The second is, as has been done in other countries, conditions placed on corporate businesses to desist from unscrupulous and unethical strategies.

SANCTUARY PLEDGE

The Mothers' Union, in line with working with families in adversity, supports Citizens for Sanctuary whose aim is to secure justice and acceptance of the need for those seeking asylum. Grassroot members are working to ensure candidates have signed the Sanctuary Pledge.

You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:39). We all have the power to influence; let us do so with care on 6 May.

Ann Glenesk has just taken office as Glasgow & Galloway's new Mothers' Union president

'Tough Choices' looks at today's big questions

TOUGH Choices is a new 'Journey in Faith' course from the diocesan Education Action network exploring contemporary ethical issues.

It takes place in Paisley over five Tuesday evenings, starting 27 April. Sessions are:

- ◆ 27 April *A Just War?* Revd Prof Michael S. Northcott
- ◆ 4 May *Climate Change* Prof Ian Arbon
- ◆ 11 May *Genetics* Prof Jim H. McKillop
- ◆ 18 May *Ethical Finance* Revd Kathy Galloway
- ◆ 25 May *End-of-Life Issues* Revd Prof David Jasper.

All sessions take place 7.30–9pm at Holy Trinity & St Barnabas Church Halls, Moss Street, Paisley (next to Gilmour Street Station). This non-certificated course is open to all. To register send a £10 cheque (payable to Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway) with your contact details to Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH. Details from Education Action convenor Revd Gordon Fyfe on 01475 673143 (gordon.fyfe@virginmedia.com).

Web worker wanted

THE Diocese requires, on a temporary basis and on terms that can be discussed, a suitably knowledgeable person to get the diocesan website on to a sound footing with a remit along the following lines:

- ◆ become familiar with the diocesan website and its links to the provincial and charge websites
- ◆ become familiar with the diocesan structure and its web requirements
- ◆ carry out such improvements and maintenance as the webmaster has identified and specified
- ◆ train the office staff and help them to set up a routine for the regular updating of the diocesan website
- ◆ establish protocols for the approval of material for inclusion
- ◆ establish protocols, safeguards, and procedures for designated people to make their own entries
- ◆ train the designated people
- ◆ set up a standard protocol and procedure for charge websites
- ◆ train members of charges in these.

If interested in discussing this further, please e-mail the Diocesan Secretary at gibfitzg@aol.com.

Backing the Nazareth Manifesto in 2010

How's this for a manifesto?

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.

Jesus' policy statement (Luke 4.18) at the beginning of his public ministry, together with his searching questions and condemnation of injustice, can help our pre-election discussions and decisions.

What hard questions should we as Christians ask the candidates?

What should we lobby for, campaign about?

Justice - Trade justice - What's that all about?

Many of us buy Fairtrade products, and seven million disadvantaged producers, and their families are benefiting from Fairtrade. But they, and millions more, are still at the mercy of unfair international trade rules. That's why we need to do more than buy Fairtrade products – we need also to campaign for trade justice.

We all need money, and money comes through trading. In Rwanda, widows or child-led families can grow much of what they need to support those in their care, but not everything can be home grown. So together the widows are developing new skills to make things to sell at the twice weekly Byumba market. But conditions for trade must be fair at every level and in many developing countries; farmers have been forced to move into

growing cash producing crops.

The price of coffee didn't plummet in recent years simply due to oversupply. The market was flooded because dozens of countries were obliged to abandon food crops in order to produce crops for export, as a condition for loans from the World Bank.

The price of sugar hasn't hit rock bottom simply because of an oversupply: oversupply was created by trade rules which allow huge subsidies to be provided to American sugar producers.

Trade justice is perhaps the one thing that could release developing countries from the shackles of unfair practice.

Trade is not currently working for the poor. For developing countries to prosper, they need to be able to trade internationally under an open and fair system. One of the biggest problems poorer countries face is barriers to markets in richer countries.

Unfortunately, moves to reform global trading rules have been slow; As well as supporting Fairtrade, we can urge our government- after the election as well as before - to support fairer trade rules. Our voices and our votes are vital!

Among many helpful websites are www.fairtrade.org.uk and www.tjm.org.uk.

*Gill Young, convener,
Companion Dioceses Action Network*

An equal say in our common future

IT is easy to forget the remarkable power of our democratic process. At least once every five years we are given the chance to vote. All citizens, regardless of wealth or status, have an equal say in deciding what our common future should be.

Of course, this is not to forget the realities of political life: the scandals, the broken promises, the personalities and opportunism. But politics is more than this – it is how the national community operates, expresses its values, engenders purpose, and affects policies directing our lives. As Christians we have a particular responsibility to encourage justice and social action for the poorest in our community.

Two interesting and helpful resources that view the General Election with a faith perspective are the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website (ctbi.org.uk) and the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office site (actsparl.org).

There's an informative 16 page downloadable booklet covering some of the key policy areas likely to be debated in the run up to polling day. Each subject has been prepared by a leading Christian expert or campaigner in that field. It does not represent a 'Church' view or support a party line, but is designed to encourage Christians to engage with a range of important issues facing our country. People take a range of subjects into account when they decide how to vote. This brief-

ing outlines some of the key policy areas, but it does not cover every subject or every detail. For each subject it provides a background, raises some key issues and suggests a series of questions for personal reflection or to ask party candidates.

For example on the issue of child and family support, the following questions are highlighted:

- ◇ What can be done to help promote a positive vision for children and young people as full and active citizens in society?
- ◇ What kinds of support do families need most to help them during difficult times?
- ◇ Often vulnerable families are wary of the 'formal' services that are available to them. How would you support the voluntary sector within the community to provide services that are responsive to local needs?

Further information and resources – including a regular newsletter and blog, and an analysis of the parties' manifestos, as well as issues not covered in the booklet – are available throughout the election campaign at the churches' election website – churcheselection.org.uk

*Very Revd Ian Barcroft, Church in Society Action
Network convener and Diocesan Dean*

► A Greener Faith? See *News and Events in Brief* for details of a day conference taking place this month.

Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's...

Jamie Hill, convener of Glasgow & Galloway's Stewardship Action Network, reflects on stewardship at election time...

The General Election debate will be well under way by the time this issue of *Diocesan News* is out, and everyone will be having their say as to what is on offer and what they are looking for.

So how should a committed Christian fulfil proper stewardship of this democratic opportunity that we have?

What were Christ's commandments to us?

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". What does that mean in a general election, where every party is trying to convince us it holds the moral high ground?

First and foremost, we should vote. God is not served by apathy or by negative protest. We are blessed generally in this country by a political class that is honest and that puts what can be done to improve our lot as a nation well above what is in it for them (despite the media hysteria about self-serving MPs and their expenses). Our mature democratic system has prevented the rise of dictatorship and extremism. We may have different priorities, but we all want the betterment of society.

BROKE

As a country we are broke, though you wouldn't know it if you had just arrived here from rural India or the Congo. Perhaps that is an especially good moment to work out what our priorities really are. In the times of apparent plenty, we did not do everything with our wealth that we might have. Now, when we have to cut our cloth, where should savings come and where should we continue to spend what we can?

We have personal interests – ourselves, our families to support, commitments to be met – and it is right that this should be part of our thinking. Our challenge is to understand what our love of our neighbour and our love of God demands from us.

Third-world poverty and debt; the increasing gap between the richest and the poorest in our country; the problems of unemployment and alcohol and rampant consumerism; the morality of war and defence spending; the predominance of Rights over Responsibilities...

The lists are endless. The politicians face essentially the same problems as we do as Christian stewards: how much do we give to particular people or projects or causes? Should we cut back on our Church giving because times are hard, or should we make other sacrifices which we might notice more? God wants us to love Him, our neighbour, and ourselves. However you vote, keep that in your mind

....and unto God that which is God's.

New children's ministry group

THE Diocesan Children's Ministry Network is a new group which has been formed to look at and advance mission amongst children of primary age and under in our Diocese – what we do with children in the church, and how we might go about outreach to them.

At present, the group members are: Judy Page (convener), Anne Jones (Diocesan Child Protection Officer), Anthea Clarke, Wendy Petrie and Wilma Keenan.

The group is working to arrange regional meetings of clergy and lay people with children's interests at heart, to talk about how we may nurture the faith of the children in our various local communities, and invitations will go to churches. The first meeting will be in Ayrshire at St Ninian's Troon, Monday 17 May, 7 for 7.30pm.

Meet and learn

ANN Glenesk, who became Mothers' Union diocesan president last month, says: "One of my first tasks is to meet and learn from the existing members of the MU.

"I will be arranging visits to branches, churches and meeting up with Diocesan members. Meantime I would welcome contact from members who are not in these two categories and from anyone who has suggestions on how the mission of the MU within the diocese can be developed." Contact her on ann.glenesk@ntlworld.com or c/o Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH.

Kirk says no to coal-fired plant

A SENIOR church figure has called on the Scottish Government to dismiss an application for a coal-fired power station in the west of Scotland.

Revd Ian Galloway says if Ayrshire Power's proposals for Hunterston were approved, Holyrood's ambitious climate change targets would be 'totally discredited'.

Mr Galloway, convener of the Church of Scotland's Church and Society Council, said:

"This proposal represents the first real challenge for the Scottish Government's much applauded climate change

legislation which was agreed by the Scottish Parliament last year."

He added: "The new application rests on the assumption that the new power station would use carbon capture and storage to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere but this technology is still in its infancy and has never been proven at the scale required to work effectively in a power station of this size.

"Unless carbon capture can be made to work effectively and quickly the new power station would seriously compromise the targets included in the Act and put the credibility of Scotland's world leading position in doubt."

Bishop David in joint church call to drop new Trident plan

MOST Revd David Chillingworth, the Scottish Episcopal Primate, wants voters to tell Westminster candidates to invest in the poor and the oppressed instead of replacing Trident.

In a joint letter to the UK Government, Bishop David and seven other Scottish church leaders said:

“At Easter, Christians of all traditions express their shared belief that God so loved the world that he sent his son Jesus Christ to suffer and die as a man.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead demonstrates that security comes from faith in the vulnerability of God in Christ and not in any human creation.

“Christian moral reasoning leads

us away from violence towards loving relationships with others.

“Violence is expressed in threat as well as in deed. The indiscriminate nature of nuclear weapons makes it impossible to justify them as weapons of war as their effect cannot be considered as either limited or proportionate. Therefore, the very possession of nuclear weapons is unjust and thus wrong. Churches have often expressed this concern.

“Christ came for the whole world and the security of the whole world is Christ’s concern.

“Nuclear weapons by their very existence undermine the security of the whole world and are inconsistent with the traditional theories of just war.

“We believe that tackling injustice, poverty and inequality would lead to a safer world for all. At a political level that transformation means choosing to spend money on changing the lives of the poor and oppressed and not on nuclear weapons.

“All of us have a political choice in the next few weeks.

“We call upon all people of goodwill to make it clear to candidates of all parties that we should choose life over death and the alleviation of poverty over the replacement of Trident.”

The full Easter appeal joint letter, and a list of all eight signatories, can be read at: scotland.anglican.org/index.php/news.

Youth Weeks deadline

THE application deadline for this year’s Glen ’10 SEC Youth Weeks is 7 June.

The Youth Weeks happen at Glenalmond College, Perthshire, each summer when young people and leaders from all over Scotland gather together for six days of sports, swimming, arts and crafts, workshops, fun events, worship and making friends.

Participants may attend either week commencing 1 August or 8 August.

The Youth Weeks are open to anyone in secondary education up to, and including, July 2010; also under-18s who have left full-time education.

It is suggested that each participant pays £110 and his/her vestry pays £90.

Contact Diocesan Youth Officer Christian Okeke (0141 221 5720; office@glasgow.anglican.org).

To download an application form visit scotland.anglican.org.

Mid-day prayer in the Diocesan Centre

A SHORT act of worship is open to anyone in the Diocese at noon on Wednesdays in the newly refurbished Diocesan Centre (5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow).

During the service, prayers are offered for the life of the United Diocese, for our nation, for peace in the world and for our ecumenical partners.

Those who would like to share this prayer but are not within easy reach can download the liturgy from:

<http://www.glasgow.anglican.org/index.php/news>.

NEW MINISTRY AND MISSION WEBSITE

A NEW website will feature resources related to ministry and mission.

There is a lot of excitement and activity around in these areas of our diocesan life, and this site will provide another vehicle for sharing good news and best practice.

On these pages, Revd Dr Ann Tomlinson, the Ministry Development Officer, intends to share news of what’s happening across the Diocese in the fields of ministry-for-mission, and also circulate reviews of materials, books read, courses attended, sermons given or heard.

Readers will also be able to download training materials for use individually, in congregations or across Regions.

In the next two months, for instance, two such resources will be being published by the Diocese under the auspices of the Education Action Group – one for Vestry members and another on ways of growing a culture of welcome in our charges. Both are being written in response to specific requests from members of the Diocese.

Ann says: “Do use these new pages to comment on what you read, and please feel free to offer suggestions on ways in which I can support your charge or Region in becoming more mission-shaped.

Visit md.glasgow.anglican.org.

News and events in brief . . .

A CONCERT for St Bartholomew's Conservation Appeal features two great bands at the Gamble Hall, Gourrock, on **Saturday 1 May** (7.30 for 8pm). They are Shadows tribute combo Into the Shadows and fun-folk group The Wherries. Bar open to 12.30am. Tickets £7 (£5 concessions).

THOSE who have come across Carlo Curley, the world famous organist, will know this larger than life character, who not only plays the organ superbly, but also provides great entertainment by virtue of his size and personality. He will be giving a recital at Holy Trinity Ayr on **Saturday 5 June**, the day of the Diocesan Ministry Celebration.

The recital is at 7.30pm and tickets (£10) can be obtained from Mackays Music Ayr or Archie Thom (thomarchie@yahoo.co.uk).

Carlo will be playing the church's new Allen organ.

AN evening of 'Flowers, Food and Fun' takes place at St Mungo's Church hall Alexandria on **Friday 7 May** from 7.30pm. Local floral art demonstrator Janette Tennant will present 'Floral Delights'. Tickets £5 from Pauline Dow 01389 751046 email: paulinedow@btinternet.com.

AHUSTINGS meeting focuses on The Climate Question on **Friday 30 April**, 7-9pm, at DG One Leisure Complex, Hoods Loaning, Dumfries DG1 2HT. More information: Julia Harrison, Julia.harrison@rspb.org.uk or 0131 311 6500.

THE diocesan Mothers' Union extends everyone an invitation to its Festival Service, at which the Chaplain, Secretary and President will be commissioned by +Gregor. The service is on **Saturday 15 May** at 11am in Holy Trinity, Ayr.

THE Scottish Prayer Book Society extends an open invitation to its Festival on **Wednesday 26 May** at Holy Trinity, Ayr. The day starts at 11am with Matins, followed by the Litany and then the Eucharist at noon. After lunch, there is a talk from stained-glass expert Susan Bradbury at 1.15pm. The Society's AGM follows at

2pm. All are welcome, including anyone who has never attended a Prayer Book service. If you require lunch, send a £3 cheque, payable to Prayer Book Society, to Mrs P Fleetwood, 32 Crompton Avenue, Glasgow G44 5TH.

ST Mary's Episcopal Church at Bridge of Weir hosts the St Mary's Lecture at 7.30pm on **Wednesday 19 May**. The topic is 'When Prophecy fails: Climate Science and Christian Witness'. The speaker is Michael Northcott, professor of Ethics at the University of Edinburgh. He is a trustee of Traidcraft and former academic chair of the Centre for Human Ecology. There will be a discussion period after the talk, followed by refreshments. All are welcome.

A CONFERENCE on Scotland's Cluniac heritage at the abbeys of Paisley and Crossraguel takes place in Paisley Town Hall on **Saturday 15 May**. Speakers will address pilgrimage, monastic life and five centuries of French influence in Scotland. Details at: www.cluny2010scotland.info

THIS year's Ministry Celebration Service will be at Holy Trinity Church, Ayr, on **Saturday 5 June**. A buffet lunch will be served from noon followed by the service at 1.15pm. This year the focus will be on the ministry of Eucharistic Assistants.

Contact Revd Shelley Marsh (office@stjamesbishopbriggs.org.uk).

A DAY conference on 'The Spiritual Journey and Well-Being in Old Age' takes place on **Thursday 27 May**, 9.30am-4.30pm, Crichton Campus, Dumfries.

Speakers include: Revd Maurice Bond, Revd Malcolm Goldsmith, Professor David Clark, Dr Harriet Mowat.

There will be a presentation of the DVD 'Spiritual Care - have you found any yet?' followed by discussion. The fee of £35 includes lunch. Booking enquiries to Faith in Older People: info@fiop.org.uk or 0131 346 7981.

A GREENER Faith is the topic of a free conference at Holy Trinity Ayr on **Saturday 22 May**, 10.30am-3.30pm.

Speakers Richard Murray (Diocese

of Aberdeen & Orkney), Andrew Mott (Edinburgh Churches Climate Change Conference) and Professor Ian Arbon (Newcastle University) will help you explore the issues, inspire your prayer and action, and take the initiative for a greener faith.

There will be a light buffet lunch (donations welcome).

To book contact Church in Society convener Ian Barcroft (01698 429895; ian.barcroft@btinternet.co.uk).

ST Margaret's Newlands' next Second Sunday concert is on **9 May**, 3.30-4.30pm, with Faggottissimo: bassoonists Victoria Scott, Graeme Brown and Katherine Nagl.

The programme will include music by Vinter, Michael Norris, Hartley, and Dave Brubeck. Admission £5 (concessions £3, under-16s free).

CHRISTIAN Aid is calling on supporters to 'Do the doorstep challenge'.

Every time a pollster or member of a political party asks what is important to you, CA wants you to list climate change in your top three issues.

A spokesman for Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, which includes Christian Aid in its members, said:

"This is vital to our campaign as they will feed this information back to their head offices."

A doorstep challenge leaflet and more information can be downloaded from www.acqscotland.org.uk

Next issue . . .

ITEMS for the June issue may be submitted up to Monday 17 May as ordinary running text (not leaflets, adverts, posters or PDFs, please) to the editor, Susi Cormack Brown, c/o the Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH, or dns@episcopalglasgow.co.uk.

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