

THE WHITE ROSE

The Parish Newsletter of Old Saint Paul's

Dec 2012 / Jan 2013

Glory to God in the Highest

This is the season of gifts and Old S. Paul's has recently received a gift which has come straight from our own history as a congregation. Some years ago James Holloway, a former member of OSP, and former Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, bought an 18th century portrait which had come up for sale. James has now generously gifted the portrait to OSP. Painted by William Robertson, it is the portrait of an 18th century Rector of Old S. Paul's, William Harper. Not many in today's congregation will have heard of him, but he played a very important part in our history. This is what James himself has written about William Harper, in his 1989 history of OSP:

After a career which took him to Orkney, Aberdeenshire and Leith, the Revd William Harper, described as a 'discreet young gentleman,' moved to Edinburgh, and in 1735 started his ministry of thirty years in Carrubber's Close.

William Harper's registers reveal marriages and baptisms of the children of earls and plumbers, advocates and shoemakers, silversmiths and butchers, in fact a pretty fair cross-section of the population of the crowded city towering above and around Carrubber's Close.

It was while William Harper was away in West Lothian marrying Hugh Smith and Elizabeth Seton on 21 September 1745, that news arrived which must have thrilled every member of the strongly pro-Jacobite congregation at S. Paul's. 'Just before this office,' wrote Harper in his



register after the entry for the Smith Seton wedding, 'Mr Charles Smith brought account of a complete victory obtained this morning at Gladsmuir [Prestonpans] by the Prince's army over that commanded by General Cope,' and he finished his note in Greek with the words from S. Luke's gospel, 'Glory to God in the Highest.'

Many of the congregation took up arms in the Stewart cause and suffered when, the following year, the Jacobite army was defeated on Culloden Moor. Episcopalians were known to have been active supporters of the Stewarts, consequently the church suffered greatly. The Scottish Episcopal Church, to use Sir Walter Scott's phrase (himself an Episcopalian), was 'reduced to a mere shadow of a shade.' This was its nadir and it could only have been through the faith and courage of men like William Harper, who ministered at S. Paul's until his death in 1765, that the church managed to struggle on.

Whatever historians or any of us may think of the Stewarts and the disastrous civil wars which they provoked in 18th century Britain, all would agree that the Jacobites who supported them were people of courage and generosity, whose spirit of self-sacrifice and boundless hope kept them going against the immense odds which were stacked against them. As James has said, very many of them were Episcopalians, and among them were the members of Old S. Paul's, including their Rector, William Harper.

Advent is the season of hope and expectation, and Christmas is the season of joy and love. New Year is the season of looking again at ourselves, and asking how these gifts are flourishing in us, or not. Many people feel as if their faith today feels a little like 'the shadow of a shade.' I sometimes ask myself how the modern Church could begin to regain the Jacobites' gifts of courage, generosity, self-sacrifice and hope, and employ them, not for the political ambitions of a failed king, but in the service of the kingdom of God. To me, people like William Harper and his congregation, represent that spirit. They were utterly committed, always hopeful, and praised God for their success – 'Glory to God in the highest.' If, I tell myself, I had half the devotion to Christ that they had to their Prince, I might be a far more committed follower of the Gospel, in action as much as in speech, than I am.

continued on page 3

S. Hugh of Lincoln: Solitude and Silence

A sermon preached at Old Saint Paul's on Sunday 19 November

Over 800 years ago a French monk in his early forties landed on the English coast. For the past 17 years he had been a monk at the Grande Chartreuse, the headquarters of the silent and austere Carthusian order. He had been summoned by King Henry II to become prior of the first Carthusian monastery, or charterhouse, in England – at Witham in Somerset, founded by the king in reparation for the murder of Thomas Becket. He fully expected to stay there quietly for the rest of his life.

His name was Hugh and the church celebrated his feast-day yesterday, as things didn't turn out quite as Hugh had anticipated. Having turned round the fortunes of his monastery (he was good at what we now call change management and delivering solutions) Hugh was made Bishop of Lincoln, then the largest diocese in England, where he remained for the last 14 years of his life, dying in the year 1200. By the time of his death he was a popular and revered figure, loved by kings and nobles as well as the poor and marginalised. Crowds lined the route of his six day funeral procession from London to Lincoln, where his shrine in the cathedral whose rebuilding he had overseen soon became a popular pilgrimage destination.

There is much to admire in Hugh's life and witness – his effective administration of his diocese (you'd expect an archdeacon to admire that!), his ability to speak truth to power, his concern for the outcast – the Jews of Lincoln saw him as their

bishop and protector – his love for children, for animals, and for the whole created order. It's ironic that his younger contemporary, S. Francis, gets all the credit and publicity for this outlook, but Hugh's love of nature was well-known, symbolised by the pet swan at one of his palaces, whose appearance in medieval and later iconography makes Hugh instantly recognisable. John Ruskin, of all people, referred to Hugh as 'the most beautiful sacerdotal figure known to me in history.'

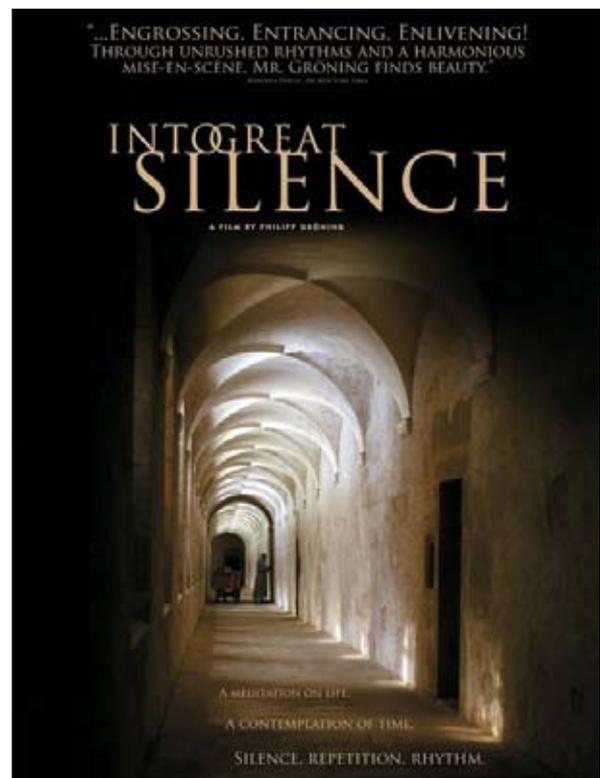
But please don't get the impression that Hugh was a mild and gentle character. He described himself as 'peppery' and certainly knew how to stand up to irascible monarchs and their hangers-on, once curbing Henry II's notorious rage by making a joke at the king's expense. He also didn't get on with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and it sometimes showed.

There was an inner toughness in Hugh which was, I suspect, born of his life as a Carthusian monk. For a Carthusian monastery, a charterhouse, is like a desert or wilderness for the soul and, as a bishop, Hugh returned to the charterhouse at Witham for a month every summer, back to

the life which was his first love and inspiration.

The Carthusian order has a strong claim to be the most austere monastic order in western Christendom. As a consequence its numbers have always been small. There was only one charterhouse in Scotland, in Perth, founded by James I in 1429. Solitude and silence are at the centre of the Carthusian way of being, are its wellspring. The spirituality of the desert informs the life of the order and so it is no accident that one of the order's patron saints is John the Baptist, that uncompromising figure dressed in animal skins, with his diet of locusts and wild honey.

Carthusians manage to combine living a hermit life, with each monk having





a two-storeyed house or cell, with existence as a community, meeting three times a day for prayer in their church. Always rather secretive and relishing its anonymity, the order has come more into the public view in the past few years with the release of a compelling film, *Into Great Silence*, which is about life at their mother house, the Grande Chartreuse, near Grenoble in France. It's worth trying to get hold of the DVD and shutting yourself away to watch it. It lasts for three hours and is virtually silent. There is no music, apart from the chanting of the monks, and no talking, except brief comments by an elderly blind monk.

Austere though they may be I don't think the Carthusians depend on locusts and wild honey for their diet, although they do wear hair shirts. They are vegetarians who are also allowed to eat fish. Some fifty years ago at their English monastery in Sussex, a friend of the community, concerned that the monks were getting a raw deal for their Christmas dinner, discovered an ancient Catholic opinion that moorhens could be classified as a kind of fish. He set to work and sent a batch of moorhens to the monastery kitchens for roasting on Christmas Day. The result was mass food-poisoning.

Solitude and silence. Both solitude and silence are difficult notions for us to handle in the modern world. We are constantly being told that happiness only comes to us through success in personal relationships. Yet the capacity to be alone is also a sign of maturity. This kind of solitude, this alone-ness, is not the same as loneliness. Listen to a modern Carthusian monk:

Solitude is not isolation, the cutting off of oneself from others. It is rather

a mystery of communion, a being-with in a deeper way; a being with God, with Christ and, potentially, with all people... It is being enabled to intercede from within a real solidarity with all people in Christ.

In our noisy world we have a similar problem with silence. It can be quite unnerving when the surface of our mind is uncluttered – we immediately look for distractions. Yet silence, like solitude, is a state of mind. It is not simply the absence of speech or noise but an inner disposition, a stillness and openness at the centre of one's being, openness to others and to God. It was the Anglican priest and theologian, Alan Ecclestone, who memorably wrote of that 'silence, which Jesus learned to call Father.'

It is important, in our busy and stressful world, to learn from Hugh of Lincoln about the significance of solitude and silence, that patient and disciplined waiting on God that can unlock so much more than the rushing around which is demanded of us. Can we afford to sit still and not feel guilty about it?

What might solitude and silence mean for you as a community here at Old Saint Paul's? In the midst of the busyness, the anxiety and uncertainty of our world, I hope you

Glory to God

continued from page 1

When you see the portrait, next time you are in Lauder House, you will see that it portrays William Harper as a man possessed of those gifts and spirit of courage and generosity. One can sense the faith, hope and love that must have helped him to keep his people going through such dark and troubled times. They are gifts that we all need again now, if we're going to point the world to God's love in Jesus Christ, the greatest gift there ever could be. And that's why I am so grateful to James Holloway for his wonderful gift.

A hope-ful Advent, a joy-ful Christmas and a faith-ful New Year to you all. Glory to God in the highest!

Fr Ian

are also able to experience the strange beauty of the desert – the oasis, the unexpected flower, the sense of being close to something primordial, of being thrown back on one's own resources and somehow finding the ability to cope. For it is out of that experience that we are made ready to wait in anticipation for what God has in store for us.



The Ven Dr
Christopher
Cunliffe is
Archdeacon of
Derby

That's the way the money goes ...

Do you know what your money's doing? No, that's not a suggestion to check your pocket or purse. We mean what's happening to your hard-earned savings. You perhaps entrusted them to your local bank, but they didn't just stick your money in a vault until you asked for it back again.

Your bank will have used your money to lend to other people and corporations whom you probably don't know and will never meet. This money may be used to invest in projects for which you have little sympathy. Your bank didn't ask you or tell you.

So, what is your money doing? It may be supporting oil extraction in places such as Athabasca in Alberta, Canada, but at the same time creating ecological disaster. Or it may be going to institutions like Huntingdon Life Sciences, which carry out research on live animals, 60,000 every year,



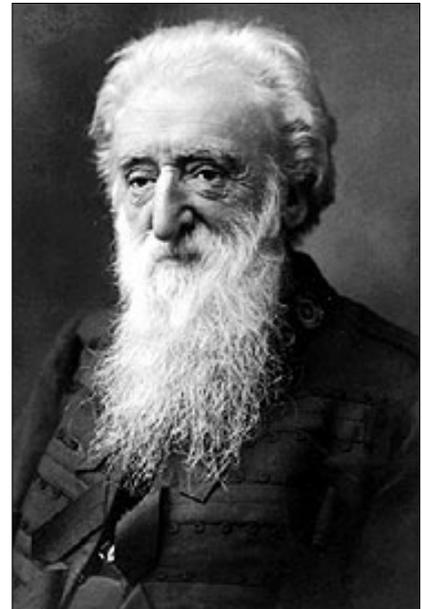
or companies that export armaments products to terrorist or guerrilla organisations in the developing world.

It is very likely that your savings will be supporting lifestyles which you may not want to encourage – for example, alcohol, tobacco, gambling or pornography. And the money earned from these “investments” doesn't all come back to you – huge amounts are paid out in bonuses to senior executives already richly paid to do their job, none of it reaching the friendly staff you meet at the counter.

And some of those earnings were gambled by Royal Bank of Scotland in 2007 in a bidding war for a Dutch bank. RBS paid €70 billion without properly checking what they were getting. More than €20 billion was lost on that deal, quickly leading to the financial crisis of 2008. The British taxpayer rescued the banking system from collapse with an injection of £37 billion into RBS, Lloyds TSB and HBOS. If they had not, the cash machines would have stopped working.

Old Saint Paul's has banked with RBS for longer than anyone can remember, but this year the Vestry decided to call a halt. We endorse the Episcopal Church's ethical investment policy, but were failing to honour it. The ethical banking market was carefully researched against the schedule of services required. Wikipedia lists only seven ethical institutions in the UK; each is supremely ethical, but

Reliance Bank's headquarters are in Lovat Lane in the City of London



William Booth founded Reliance Bank to raise funds for the Salvation Army

one by one each proved to be lacking in provision of the facilities required.

A solution was found in an unlikely place. Lovat Lane is a narrow alley in the City of London, not far from the Monument to the Great Fire. Here is to be found the headquarters of Reliance Bank, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Salvation Army. The Bank was originally founded by General Booth to raise funds for the Army at the turn of the last century, but now provides banking services to a range of individuals, businesses and charities.

No, you haven't seen Reliance Bank on your high street, but it has arrangements with other institutions to provide the necessary counter service. And it has impeccable standards: 'driven by Christian

continued on page 3



Christmas at Old Saint Paul's



Sunday 2 December at 6.30pm

Insistent warnings

Scripture, music and poetry for the start of Advent
by candlelight

Sundays during Advent

10.30am High Mass

6.30pm Blessing of the Light, Evensong and Benediction
by candlelight

Sunday 23 December at 6.30pm

Nine Lessons and Carols

by candlelight

Christmas Eve

Monday 24 December at 4.30pm

Crib Service

for families and young children

Monday 24 December at 11.30pm

Midnight Mass of Christmas

by candlelight

Christmas Day

Tuesday 25 December at 10.30am

Mass of Christmas Day

continued from page 2
principles, Reliance Bank does not knowingly maintain accounts for companies or persons who are involved in the manufacture of armaments, alcoholic drinks or tobacco products, repressive entities or those who do not respect human rights or do not operate in a socially responsible manner'. The bank's mission statement reads: 'to stand out as a bank with a Christian and ethical conscience whilst delivering an excellent, efficient and personal banking service..

So, we now bank with Reliance (and we are actively persuading other churches and the diocese to consider what they do). Meanwhile, the Vestry has written to all members requesting them to redirect their standing order. The majority have done so, and we hope that the few who remain will not require a further reminder to make the switch.

But the question remains: what's your money doing?

Nigel Cook

Congratulations to Nigel on his recent appointment as Edinburgh Diocesan Treasurer. We wish him all the very best in this new role and know the diocese will benefit greatly from his expertise.



The Mission to Seafarers

In Mission to Seafarers a lot of what we do is the small nuts and bolts stuff that show someone cares. If you need to phone home a phone card is a life saver. If you need to get to Asda the five mile round trip is just too long in time, so a lift is needed. Someone who is not one of your shipmates, whose stories you have heard every day since you left the last-port-but-one, must be so refreshing. In other words, we try and do what anyone would want done for the people they love if they were a long way from home.

On other occasions what we do is a bit more dramatic. I met Ronaldo on his ship at Grangemouth one Sunday afternoon. Sunday afternoon is a good time to visit those who can't sleep, or are at a loose end, or just plain worried about something. Ronaldo asked if I would take him to Asda. So we drove there.

On the way he told me his story. He had heard from his wife, just before they left the last port, that their baby, born at just seven and a half months a few weeks before, was ill. When they were at sea he could not contact her. When they got to shore no one had a mobile that was working, and his internet 'dongle' was not working either, so he needed to go into Asda to get a top up.

Well we did not go to Asda at once. I could not think of any thing else to do other than to take him home, and he was able to contact home on the phone and to use the internet. I have rarely seen anyone so relieved or grateful. To us what seemed like a very basic step in humanity was to him, for that hour or so he spoke to his wife, the whole world. He had not yet seen a picture of the baby, and my wife and I watched as he downloaded the picture over the internet. There was not a dry eye in the house.

In terms of the Bible, what we do is the least anyone can do, but everything we do is in the same Spirit that Jesus spoke about in Matthew

25, 'When I was in prison, you visited me; when I was thirsty you gave me a drink; when I was hungry you fed me.' It is our calling to help those who are a long way from home. At Mission to Seafarers we visit care for and befriend in that spirit.

Now Max and Ronaldo may not seem to have very much to do with your life. However, at least 90% of the consumer goods in this country are imported. Next time you are in Ikea check out the manufactured goods details: it will be hard to find anything not made in China. The average Sunday lunch has about 1,500 miles on it: lamb from Australia, new potatoes from Egypt and mangel-tout from Africa (figures from Department of Trade and Industry). Every cup of coffee starts its life somewhere other than here. Nearly every glass of wine is imported.

So 90% of the time you buy something, you are employing some of the Ronaldos of this world, at least indirectly. So Mission to Seafarers and other organisations like us, seek in some small way to take care of those people at sea, and takes some small part in the pastoral care of their families.

So how can you help? Well I would value your prayers; this is all very new to me. If you have some time spare you may wish to become a ship's visitor. There are details on our website about how to help financially. If you want you can knit Max and Ronaldo or one of his many co workers a woolly hat using the pattern to the left.

*The Rev Tim Tunley
Chaplain to Mission to Seafarers,
Scotland (www.missiontoseafarers.org), who preached at OSP on 21
October (Trafalgar Day).*

Woollen Hat Knitting Pattern

Double knit or 4 ply wool (2 oz of wool)
Size 8 (4mm) needles

Cast on 120 stitches.

Rib (2 plain 2 purl) for 12 inches.

Next Row: Knit 2 together to end of the row.

Next Row: Purl.

Repeat these two rows once more.

Knit 1 row.

Purl 1 row.

Pull thread through all stitches and sew up seam.

Your knitting is greatly appreciated by the seafarers we serve.



Tithing Project: News of S. Martin's Community Centre, Dalry Road



The S. Martin's Community Centre has been our Tithing Fund project for 2012, adopted by the AGM of OSP a year ago. S. Martin's in Dalry Road is a small congregation with a big project they are trying to get off the ground. They are planning to convert their church building for shared use by the congregation and the local community. The lack of funding for advice and information places and proper open meeting spaces has been a concern for people in the area for some time. The church is already widely used, but does not have disabled access and is in urgent need of renovation (running hot water, toilets, proper kitchen facilities).

The Vestry is proposing S. Martin's as our Tithing Project again, for the same reasons that we adopted it a year ago:

- it is about partnership with the local community in a well

thought-out and sustainable project which will make a real difference to people in Dalry. This shares a vision of many at OSP who would want us to reach out to the local community of the Old Town in equally appropriate and effective ways.

- it is about supporting a fellow Episcopal congregation, it is 'in our family', and as we all know, the support of family members is a real encouragement. If other Episcopalians are not willing to support S. Martin's, why should others do so?
- a further contribution of approximately £4,000 from us would show confidence in them and make a difference to the momentum of the whole project at this crucial stage.

Crucial because, since last year, there have been some changes in the project's aims, necessitated by their partner charity, 'Health All-Round', no longer requiring office space in the new centre. This has however reduced the overall cost of the project to a more manageable £300,000. So far S. Martin's has raised £160,000 towards this total. All contributions are welcome and much of what they have raised so far has come from relatively small donations like ours.

However one of their major funders is closing at the end of January, and if S. Martin's do not spend that money by then, they will lose it. So things are being moved along quickly. The plans have now gone in to the Planning Department, by whom S. Martin's have been told that problems are not expected. In addition, several trust

applications are in the pipe-line, some of them requiring assurance of planning permission being granted.

The purpose – to provide a community resource in this relatively underprivileged part of the city, is one that the Vestry wholeheartedly supports, and will propose to the congregation at the AGM that we continue to make it the object of our Tithing Fund for another year.

Fr Ian

New Arrival



Congratulations to Sara Wasson and Graham Boyd on the birth of their daughter Gwendolen on 12 September.

Gwendolen recently enjoyed her first visit to OSP on 18 November where she received a warm welcome from the congregation and seemed particularly taken with the music during the service!

Book Review: The Mountain of Silence

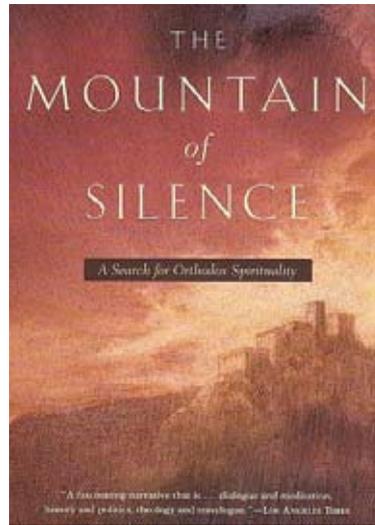
Author: Kyriacos C. Markides

Publisher: Image

In the earthly 2000's I lived in London and during that time went often to the Russian Orthodox cathedral, at that time headed up by Metropolitan Anthony. He had had a great influence on me as a student when I read *School for Prayer* and *Living Prayer*. The services were altogether a different experience, wonderful music, extremely long and incomprehensible liturgy, half in Russian and half English, hundreds of candles, people wandering around at will, a few chairs against the walls for the elderly, much kissing of icons and deep bowing. But when Fr Anthony spoke at the end in his homily you could hear a pin drop. He was the most focused, unassuming and radiantly holy person. Every word was laden with meaning and it was clear his tradition had formed something in him which was quite simply godly. Fascinated by this I sought to find out more, visited an Orthodox monastery in Essex several times and began to read more widely.

One of the books I came across which was proving to be hugely popular was *The Mountain of Silence* by an American professor of Sociology and writer on spirituality, Kyriacos C. Markides.

Markides was much struck by the qualities of one of the charismatic and highly articulate monks he met on a visit to Mount Athos. He later followed him to Cyprus where he had become abbot of Panagia Monastery, remote and high in the Troodos mountains. Markides spent several months there where he was allowed to live as a monk himself and work as a chauffeur. This gave him



many hours of access to talk to Fr Maximos and ask him pretty much anything, including things quite personal and to do with the difficulty of living in the world but as a monk. 'Fr Maximos' is in fact a pseudonym for Fr Athanasios, now Metropolitan of Limassol in the Church of Cyprus. Prior to his time at the Panagia monastery he had spent several years as a former monk on Mount Athos and like Metropolitan Anthony was much sought after as a wise counsellor and spiritual director.

The resulting book is a record of a series of discussions, answers to questions and anecdotes from their time together. It is also a reflection from the author's own perspective on them. This is often deep and complex stuff but made accessible through the conversational style.

To quote from Maximos: 'Remember whatever good or bad things happen to us, they have only one single purpose, to awaken us to the reality of God and help us on the path toward union with Him. There is no other reason for being born on the planet.' In the Greek Orthodox tradition, 'the natural state of a

human being is the continuous contemplation and memory of God.'

Fr Maximos is also recorded commenting on a variety of other subjects including justice, evil, silence, the meaning of the church, saints, the Jesus prayer, icons, and the process of theosis, or union with God.

I am not alone in saying that the downside of the book is that Markides cannot help himself commenting on all the things that Maximos says, and he sees things not as a Christian himself but as a somewhat new age and profoundly academic explorer, who wants to compare and contrast. Some of his comments are therefore widely off the mark and speculative or simply imaginary. This leads to some fascinating juxtapositions but is misleading as an interpretation of Orthodox thought and discipline. The real error is that it over-spiritualises the monastic experience and seems to imply that God is only really available in the extreme and rarified atmosphere that this type of place exemplifies. The humble childlike walk with Jesus in daily life which is the root experience of all who are faithful doesn't really get expressed at all.

As a resource for understanding Orthodox teaching on prayer and a bit on how a highly disciplined Christian life is lived by the Orthodox, and what the monastic experience it is a very valuable source but as a commentary on Orthodox or Christian life it is not without its flaws. It should have appeal to the lively questioning mind of the OSP member, and as long as one is aware of the shortcomings it would be a great starter for discussion.

Review by Peter Lusby Taylor



Restoration & Renewal Project Update

The following is a copy of a letter from the Vestry which was distributed to the congregation on Sunday 25 November.

During 2012, as will have been noticed, progress has been made on the project to upgrade our Jeffrey Street entrance. The Calvary stair has been cleaned and new lighting installed; new doors are arriving, and new paving has been laid, soon to be enhanced by new external lighting.

Preparatory work has also taken place for the installation of a platform stairlift. Some may be wondering when this will be installed. The Vestry wishes to advise the Congregation on the current state of progress.

After considerable research to identify a contractor with the competence to deliver a complex installation and with an established reputation, the Vestry agreed terms with ECA Lifts Ltd ("ECA") in February 2012. Due to the bespoke nature of the product, it was agreed that progress payments would be made during the design and manufacture stages, with a final payment being made on completion.

Detailed design drawings were agreed, and manufacture was authorised by us in early May. In conjunction with other works on the Calvary stair, it was agreed that the stairlift would be delivered for installation in early September. During several contacts with ECA during the period May to September we were assured that all was in order. However, when our project team attempted later to contact ECA to confirm installation arrangements, it was clear that difficulties had arisen.

The result of a series of conversations with ECA and directly with Extrema Srl, the manufacturer in Italy and not connected with ECA, was that ECA were in financial trouble and no longer had funds to enable them to instruct manufacture, despite having received payments from us. Extrema had agreed our design but no manufacture had begun.

By this time, the Vestry had paid to ECA £19,181, leaving £4,795 to be paid following installation. After careful investigation and consideration of all possibilities, the Vestry has now been able to agree terms with a different company, Simply Access Ltd, who will install our stairlift as designed. Extrema have agreed to manufacture the stairlift for cost price, and Simply Access will install the product with the barest profit margin. The additional cost incurred to secure installation will be £13,135; installation is now expected towards the end of December, and no cash will be disbursed until delivery has been made.

The Vestry is also pursuing ECA for recovery of sums paid to it. However, no indication can be given of what may be recovered, and the Vestry has to balance the costs of legal action against the prospect of recovery, which appears to be low.

The Vestry considers it an obligation that we share this unwelcome news with the Congregation. The course of events could not have been foreseen, and we are victims of the current economic situation. We believe, however, that we have taken all possible, reasonable steps, in the circumstances, to minimise loss. We also take this opportunity, on behalf

of the Congregation, to record our huge appreciation to David Taylor for all the additional efforts in which he has been engaged to turn this situation round. Anyone who wishes to discuss this matter further is welcome to raise it with any member of the Vestry.

Canon Ian Paton
Sheila Brock
Sophie Cartwright
Thomas Clement
Nigel Cook
Jonathan Livingstone
David McLellan
Mhairiad Monelle
Kimberley Moore Ede
Eric Stoddart
Ingrid Uglov
Nicholas Uglov

News From Fr Simon



Congratulations and good wishes to Fr Simon Tibbs on his appointment to be Vicar of the United Benefice of Saint Faith, Great Crosby and Saint Mary the Virgin, Waterloo Park in the Diocese of Liverpool.

Simon's induction will be on Wednesday 9 January 2013 at Saint Mary the Virgin.

A Coffee With . . .



. . . Peder Aspen

I was born in Glasgow during the Second World War when my father, a Norwegian, was stationed on active service. After the war we went back to Norway for three years but the country was on its knees, there was no work for an engineer and so we came back to Glasgow. I went to Shawlands Academy and when I left school I went to work as a Lab technician in the Chemistry department of Glasgow University.

Maybe it was because both my grandfathers were stone masons but even as a child I was interested in stones and fossils spending many happy weekends collecting them around Glasgow. I was brought up as an Episcopalian, singing in the church choir and becoming head choirboy. One way or another 'rocks' and 'piscies' run deeply in my background.

After 10 years of chemistry at Glasgow, I changed professions and became a trainee assistant at Paisley Museum, specialising in Geology – the real interest in my life. After qualifying at Paisley, I went on to Kelvingrove Museum and eventually

five fingers and five toes. Pederpes Finial is an amphibian from some 320 million years ago and our oldest fossil relative!

I've never found any great paradox in being both a Christian and a scientist and I don't think they are either mutually exclusive or antagonistic views of life. Modern quantum physics teaches us to accept the paradox of a duality, where different states can exist at the same time and also that some questions about the nature of reality may not have 'rational' answers.

I find questions of religious belief difficult to answer in a precise way, since I take a 'mystical' view of my faith and I find that the spiritual dimension at OSP is just what I need. The music and the liturgy enhance the feelings that I have in church and this blends well with my interest in early church music and Sufi mysticism.

When I was looking for a church to go to a friend recommended Old

OSP 17th century pewter; picture taken from the archives

Saint Paul's. I took his advice and then later Maisie Orr introduced me to Margaret! So you could say that OSP changed my life!

Ten years ago I took early retirement and adopted two new interests – the study of lichens and the OSP archives. The lichen studies were the result of a bad conscience as I had spent most of my life removing them from rocks. Now I am studying and helping to conserve these interesting plants by going on recording and collecting expeditions with curators from the Royal Botanic Garden.

I had been working with Arthur Temple on the church archives and continued to do this after he died. Everything is now computerised but the original documents from as early as 1720 are all in the City Archives. We have pewter vessels dating from 1689 which may well have come with the congregation when it left St Giles'.

It's difficult to single out any one





person or event that influenced my life. Teachers, colleagues, people who are interested in ideas – not to mention Jesus and the Bible – have had a cumulative effect, pouring thoughts and ideas into my mind.

Fortunately I am still very active so tend to cycle for relaxation! I like to read and listen to music, especially Byrd and Tallis, but I am not keen on going to the theatre or to concerts.

I read a lot, mainly travel and adventure writers such as Colin Thubron and William Dalrymple. But I also recently read the Confessions of S. Augustine and am fascinated by the history of the early church.

I rarely get angry but waste of all kind, financial, resources and especially food does make me rage.

I am happiest with the grandchildren, out in the field or at OSP. But I find hope difficult at times. We seem to be on a fast train racing towards disaster. Our extravagant life style, which is increasingly being adopted in the developing world, will lead us to destroy the planet. As Christians we have a duty to care for creation –

but there are no easy answers.

Turkey is my favourite part of the world where I have followed in the footsteps of Saint Paul, but this year I went along the Turkish/Syrian border to see where Abraham was (allegedly) born and to visit the area where Job lived. I also visited the temples at Gobekli Tepe, the oldest site of religious worship which is some 10,000 years old.

As dinner guests I would invite some of the women mentioned in the New Testament, such as Martha, Mary and Lydia as I'd be fascinated to hear about their major role in supporting the ministry of Jesus. But I'd have a lot of explaining to do over the Church's poor record of appointing women to high office!

*Peder Aspen was talking to
Sheila Brock*

Next Issue Deadline

The deadline for the February issue is **Monday 28 January**. Please email contributions to media@osp.org.uk.

To My Aunt Gloria

An Adaptation of a Gaelic Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you

May the wind be always at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

The rains fall soft upon your fields

And until we meet again, may God
Hold you in the palm of his hand

And raise you from the coasts you love

To the orchards in the Heavens.

The first six lines of this blessing are identical to an old Irish verse. The last two lines were composed by Thomas Hoskyns Leonard.

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Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church is a registered Scottish charity number SC017399

Calendar & Rotas for December 2012 & January 2013

10.30am High Mass					6.30pm
Day Observance	Readings	Readers	Intercessor	Offertory	Readings & Reader
December 2 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Jeremiah 33.14-16 Psalm 25.1-10 1 Thess 3.9-13 Luke 21.25-36	<i>Mhairéad Monelle</i> <i>Janet de Vigne</i>	John Thompson		<i>Advent Carols</i>
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Mon 3 –Francis Xavier, priest and missionary in Japan, 1552; Fri 4 –Clement of Alexandria, teacher, c 210; Thu 6 –Nicholas of Myra, bishop, 4th cent; Fri 7 –Ambrose of Milan, bishop and teacher, 397; Sat 8 –The Conception of Mary, Mother of the Lord				
December 9 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Baruch 5.1-9 Luke 1.68-79 (resp) Philippians 1.3-11 Luke 3.1-6	<i>Elsbeth Strachan</i> <i>Felicity Cullen</i>	Helen Tyrrell		Isaiah 11.1-10 Matthew 3.1-12 <i>Nigel Cook</i>
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Fri 14 –John of the Cross, priest and teacher, 1591				
December 16 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Zephaniah 3.14-20 Isaiah 12.2-6 (resp) Philippians 4.4-7 Luke 3.7-18	<i>Margaret Aspen</i> <i>Brenda White</i>	Pam Gilchrist		Isaiah 35.1-10 Matthew 11.2-11 <i>Mark Gibson</i>
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Wed, Fri, Sat –Ember Days of prayer for the vocation of all God's people				
December 23 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Micah 5.2 5a Psalm 80.1-7 Hebrews 10.5-10 Luke 1.39-55	<i>Hilary Campbell</i> <i>James Campbell</i>	Bill Morton		<i>Christmas Carols</i>
December 25 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	Monday 24 11.30pm Isaiah 9.2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2.11-14 Luke 2.1-20	<i>Eric Stoddart</i> <i>Jean Keltie</i>	Clergy		
	Tuesday 25 10.30am Isaiah 52.7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1.1-12 John 1.1-14	<i>Elsbeth Messenger</i> <i>E R Haire</i>	Clergy		
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Wed 26 –St Stephen, deacon and martyr; Thu 27 –St John, apostle and evangelist; Fri 28 –The Holy Innocents; Sat 29 –Thomas of Canterbury, bishop and martyr, 1170				
December 30 1st SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	1 Samuel 2.18-20,26 Psalm 148 Colossians 3.12-17 Luke 2.41-52	<i>Susanna Kerr</i> <i>Andrew Kerr</i>	Jonathan Livingstone		Evening prayer said
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Mon 31 –John Wycliffe, priest, 1384; Mon 1 –The Naming of Jesus; Tue 2 –Seraphim of Sarov, monk and teacher, 1833				
2013 January 6 THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	Isaiah 60.1-6 Psalm 72.1-7,10-14 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12	<i>David Anderson</i> <i>Sheila Brock</i>	E R Haire		Isaiah 52.7-10 Matthew 12.14-21 <i>Rob Wightman</i>
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Thu 10 –William Laud, archbishop of Canterbury, 1645; Fri 11 –David, king of Scots, 1153				
January 13 THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	Isaiah 43.1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8.14-17 Luke 3.15-17,21-22	<i>Trevor Harding</i> <i>Judith Brearley</i>	Baptism		Isaiah 40.1-11 John 1.1-7,19-20,29-34 <i>Ron Hafidson</i>
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Mon 14 –St Kentigern (or Mungo), bishop of Glasgow, c 603; Thu 17 –Anthony of Egypt, abbot, 356; Fri 18 –The Confession of St Peter				
January 20 2nd Sunday after Epiphany	Isaiah 62.1-5 Psalm 36.5-10 1 Cor 12.1-11 John 2.1-11	<i>Frances Macleod</i> <i>Jimmy Blair</i>	Pam Gilchrist		Isaiah 49.1-7 John 1.35-42 <i>Tim Honisett</i>
<i>Weekday observances:</i>	Mon 21 –Agnes, martyr at Rome, c 304; Thu 24 –Francis de Sales, abbot, 356; Sat 26 –Timothy and Titus, bishops and companions of Paul				
January 27 THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL	Acts 26.9-23 Psalm 67 Galatians 1.11-24 Matthew 10.16-22	<i>Eric Stoddart</i> <i>Helen Tyrrell</i>	tbc		Sirach 39.1-10 Acts 9.1-22 <i>Ginger Franklin</i>