

THE WHITE ROSE

The Parish Newsletter of Old Saint Paul's Church June-July 2016

Fear not

Referendum time again, and people in the UK have been thinking about Europe and the part they think the UK and Scotland should play in it. One notable thing about this Referendum, compared to the Independence Referendum nearly 2 years ago, has been the relatively low level of public debate there seems to be in Scotland. This may change, of course, depending on the result.

But one thing we have become aware of in the more intense debate that is going on south of the border, is that each side tends to accuse the other of scare-mongering. A caricature of the argument could go like this, as much for one side as for the other: "Leaving/Remaining will have terrible consequences; there will be less security; you will be poorer; the other side are just trying to scare you."

The politics of fear is always depressing, partly because it is often so effective. We can so easily live out of fear, and be persuaded by people who both stir up our worries and offer solutions for them. The great American novelist Marilynne Robinson has written a lot about the way being afraid has come to feel normal and accepted. We see it not only in political campaigns, but in the growth of racism and sexism and the fear of immigrants. We see it in the rise of nationalism and intolerance, fuelling outbreaks of religious and ethnic violence.

Some fears are very real, of course. Life is fragile, uncertain, and full of risk. All of us will suffer loss and sorrow and death. We cannot escape or prevent that. But of more

concern than any of those things, is the rise of a politics based on fear that should give us reason for alarm, especially when it causes us to act out of fear instead out of hope, and, as Marilynne Robinson says, "because in an unsafe world to value one another is our greatest safety, and to indulge in fear is our gravest error."

As people of faith this should

and hope-filled privilege in a democratic society. Details are included elsewhere, so please come and join us for the ecumenical prayer on the evening before 23 June, and drop in to one of the churches during the day itself.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have offered this prayer for the Referendum, and I'm glad to include it here



concern us greatly, because the most commonly repeated phrase in the Bible is "Fear not!" What Christ promises is that faith is the opposite of fear, love is stronger than hate, and hope is more resilient than worry. As Marilynne Robinson says, "Fear is not a Christian habit of mind."

This is the spirit in which Christians try to make judgements about generosity and justice in the choices they make as workers or as employers, as friends and partners and parents, or as voters in a referendum. With our neighbouring Old Town churches, OSP will be offering space for people in the community to pray and reflect on Referendum day, as a sign that we believe voting is always a positive

Loving God,
in the referendum
that lies before us,
in the challenge of
seeking an answer,
in our differences of opinion,
in our need to understand,
may you guide us
in our decisions,
make us gracious
in our disagreement,
and may we join you
to work for the
building of your kingdom
rather than our own.

Fr Ian

Update on Lower Level Refurbishment

In May, the congregation was given the opportunity to see two different proposals for what could potentially be done with the lower level of the church. The enthusiasm of those who gathered around the plans and the 3D walkthrough was evident from the buzz of conversation, the many questions that were asked and the useful comments that were written on the Post-its.

The R&R Committee has since met to discuss and consolidate the

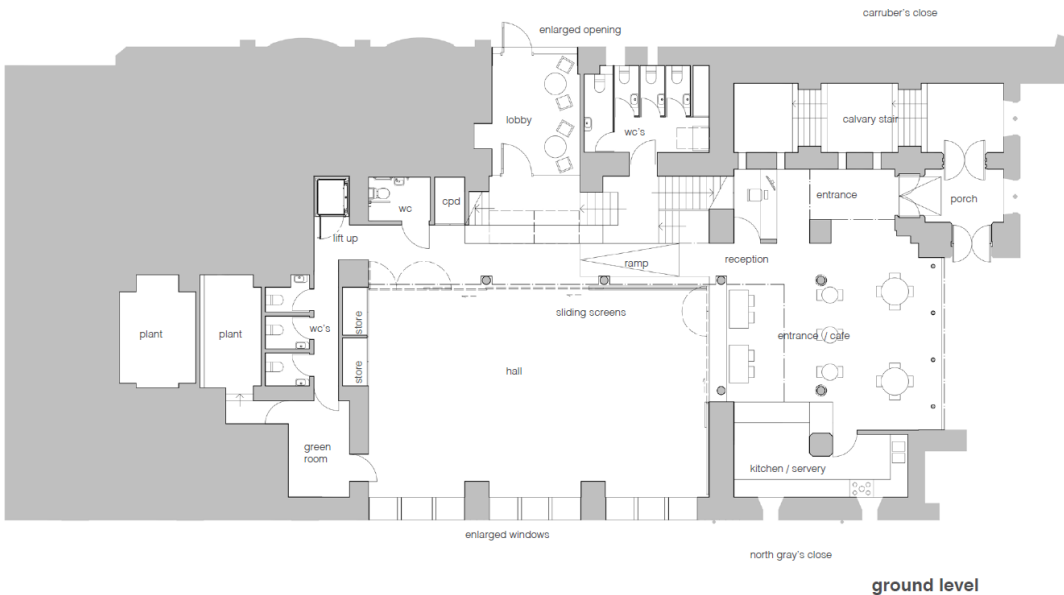
feedback and this has been passed on to the architects. WT Architecture are now in the process of drafting a new proposal based on the recommendations from the congregation. This proposal will be presented at the parish lunch on 26 June, with a chance for questions and comments.

There will be preliminary consultations with Historic Scotland and Edinburgh Council with regards to planning permission. A quantity

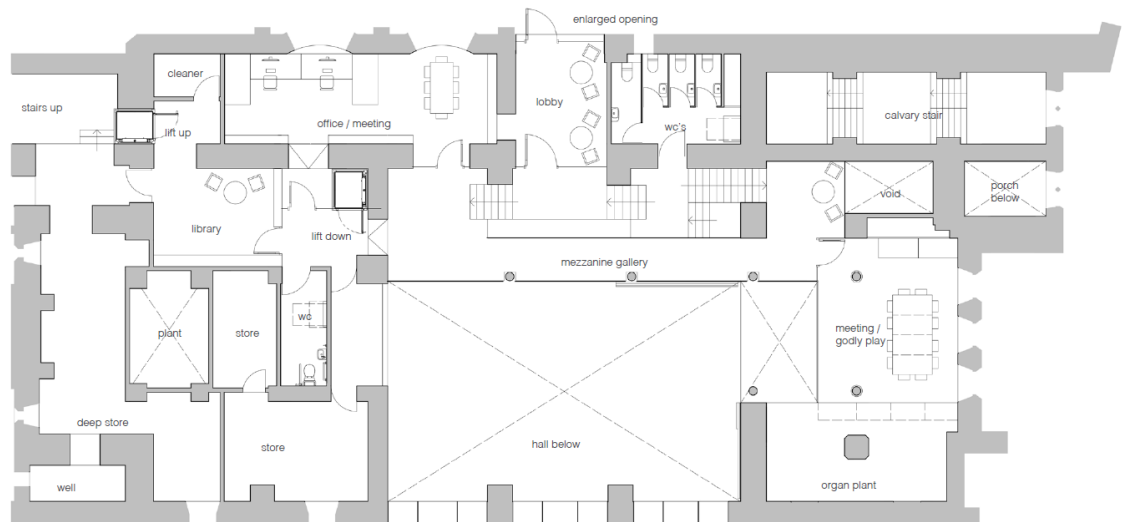
surveyor has been appointed and will advise on budget costs for the work.

After this we will then need to prepare a business case and to seek sources of funding, for example from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Be assured that the congregation will be kept informed every step of the way. If anyone has any questions, concerns, observations or comments, please contact Ian Stewart or anyone on the R&R Committee.



ground level



mezzanine level



THINK : PRAY : VOTE

On the 23 June, British citizens are being asked to vote in a referendum that will ask them to consider the future of Britain in Europe. The political debates tends to focus on the economic implications but to fully understand the political situation we need to consider the moral and religious dimensions, too. Thinking well about life in all its parts is important not only for this referendum, but for the way we live no matter what the outcome.

Old Testament theologian, Walter Brueggemann writes about *The Prophetic Imagination*. The political task of theology is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us. It should criticise and energise, encouraging people to get involved and to think differently about things we take for granted.

There are two ways in which we can consider the fullness of life from a Biblical perspective. The first is dignity of every person and second is the importance of relationship. When we consider people rather than numbers or profit, it allows us to the world through a different lens. All people have a right to live (and die) with dignity: this asks us to think about our response (as church, as individuals, as a nation) to the way our neighbours live.

Ubuntu is a traditional African philosophy that offers us an understanding of ourselves in relation with the world. According to *Ubuntu*, a common bond exists between all persons and it is through this bond, and through our interaction with our fellow human beings, that we discover our own human qualities. One way of putting this, is that 'a person is a person through other persons'. We affirm our own humanity when we acknowledge that of others. Nelson Mandela summed up his understanding of *Ubuntu* by asking 'Are you going to enrich yourself in order to enable the community around you to improve?'

In the Old Town, we will be holding ecumenical prayer gatherings. You are welcome to join us for one or all of these:

Wednesday, 22nd June, 6:45pm at St Patrick's Church

Thursday, 23rd June, 8am at Old St Paul's Church

Thursday, 23rd June, 4:30 at Canongate Kirk

We need to remember that even the most powerful nations in the world are reliant on other nations and of course, on people, for effective functioning and governance—no nation is self-sufficient. This means that we live in a delicate network of interdependence. An interdependence that shouldn't be exploitative or superior but should respect *all* life—all cultures, all people, all humanity. We need to consider how we do this no matter the outcome of the referendum vote—how do we live well together, in Scotland, in the UK, in Europe and, indeed, with people all around the world?

As Christians, it is important that we reflect thoughtfully and prayerfully on the debate before we vote.

Relationship is at the heart of the Gospel message and yet is often not part of our political rhetoric. Jesus commands us to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind' and 'to love your neighbour as yourself'. What do these words

mean in our current context?

We need to consider how we can best serve the common good and the right to a flourishing life for all people - who needs us to be their neighbour? It is crucial to think about what ideals we have for future political and economic structures and relationships on local, European and global levels.

For challenging reflections on 'Think, Pray, Vote', see the resources available online from the *Joint Public Issues Team*. *Christians in Politics* offer links to many resources, including a Biblical look at issues like autonomy, immigration, authority and money. *Theos Think Tank* published a report, *A Soul for the Union*, which gives a history of the European Union, acknowledges problems with the functioning of the EU today and suggests what is important for a future political moral vision. (Please note that the content of these websites does not necessarily reflect the views of Old St. Paul's).

Jenny Wright

Next Issue Deadline

The deadline for the June & July issue of the White Rose is Friday 25 May. Please email contributions to media@osp.org.uk.



Do we have your email address?

Update your details (address, phone, mobile and email) during our next membership drive or email office@osp.org.uk.

Sign up to our email newsletter:



Calendar and Lectionary June–July 2016

<p>June 5–3RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> 1 Kings 17.17-24; Psalm 30 Galatians 1.11-24; Luke 7.11-17 <i>Readings at Evensong:</i> Genesis 12.1-9; Matthew 9.9-13,18-26 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Wed 8–Ephrem the Syrian, <i>deacon and teacher, 373</i> Thu 9–Saint Columba of Iona, <i>abbot, 597</i> Sat 11–Saint Barnabas, <i>apostle</i></p>	<p><i>Weekday observances:</i> Mon 4–Saint Thomas, <i>apostle</i> Wed 6–Palladius, <i>bishop in Tayside, c 450</i> Thu 7–Boisil, <i>prior of Melrose, c 642</i></p>
<p>June 12–4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> 2 Samuel 11.26–12.10,13-15; Psalm 32 Galatians 2.15-21; Luke 7.36–8.3 <i>Readings at Evensong:</i> Genesis 18.1-14; Matthew 9.35–10.8 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Tue 14–Basil of Caesarea, <i>379</i>; Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>c 390</i>; Gregory of Nyssa, <i>394</i>; <i>bishops and teachers</i> Sat 18–Bernard Mizeki, <i>martyr, 1896</i></p>	<p>July 10–8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Deuteronomy 30.9-14; Psalm 25.1-10 Colossians 1.1-14; Luke 10.25-37 <i>Readings at Evening Prayer:</i> Genesis 25.19-34; Matthew 13.1-9,18-23 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Mon 11–Benedict of Nursia, <i>abbot, c 550</i> Tue 12–Drostan of Deer, <i>abbot c 600</i></p>
<p>June 19–5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Isaiah 65.1-9; Psalm 22.19-28 Galatians 3.23-29; Luke 8.26-39 <i>Readings at Evensong:</i> Genesis 21.8-21; Matthew 10.24-39 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Mon 20–Fillan, <i>abbot, c 750</i>; Wed 22–Alban, <i>first British martyr, c 209</i>; Fri 24–The Birth of Saint John the Baptist; Sat 25–Moluag of Lismore, <i>bishop, c 592</i></p>	<p>July 17–9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Genesis 18.1-10a; Psalm 15 Colossians 1.15-28; Luke 10.38-42 <i>Readings at Evening Prayer:</i> Genesis 28.10-19a; Matthew 13.24-30,36-43 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Thu 21–William Wilberforce, <i>social reformer, 1833</i> Fri 22–Saint Mary Magdalene</p>
<p>June 26–SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL, APOSTLES <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Ezekiel 34.11-16; Psalm 87 2 Timothy 4.1-8; John 21.15-19 <i>Readings at Evensong:</i> Isaiah 49.1-6; Galatians 2.1-9 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Mon 27–Alexander Jolly, <i>bishop of Moray, 1838</i> Tue 28–Irenaeus of Lyons, <i>bishop and teacher, 202</i> Fri 1–Seif, <i>bishop in Kinross, c 500</i></p>	<p>July 24–10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Genesis 18.20-32; Psalm 138 Colossians 2.6-19; Luke 11.1-13 <i>Readings at Evening Prayer (Eve of Saint James):</i> Deuteronomy 30.11-20; Mark 5.21-43 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Mon 25–St James, <i>apostle</i>; Tue 26–Anne and Joachim, <i>parents of Mary, Mother of the Lord</i> Wed 27–John Comper, <i>priest in Aberdeen, 1903</i> Fri 29–Martha and Mary of Bethany; Sat 30–Silas, <i>companion of Paul</i></p>
<p>July 3–7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Isaiah 66.10-14; Psalm 66.1-9 Galatians 6.1-16; Luke 10.1-11,16-20 <i>Readings at Evensong (Eve of Saint Thomas):</i> Isaiah 35.1-10; John 11.1-16</p>	<p>July 31–11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST <i>Readings at Mass:</i> Ecclesiastes 1.2,12-14; 2.18-23; Psalm 49.1-12 Colossians 3.1-11; Luke 12.13-21 <i>Readings at Evening Prayer:</i> Genesis 32.22-31; Matthew 14.13-21 <i>Weekday observances:</i> Fri 5–Oswald of Northumbria, <i>martyr, 642</i>; Sat 6– THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD</p>



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