



# St John's News

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*The newsletter of St John's Church of Scotland, Carlisle*

*Winter 2010-11*

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Member honoured by Probus Club - page 8



*Photograph by Bob Copeland LRPS, CPAGB*

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# Pastor Roy Writes...

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Dear Friends,

**Christmas is Coming!**  
( as if you didn't know !)

As I write this, I am only hours away from leaving for 10 days in Canada. Christine, my wife went one week ahead of me and has been enjoying good weather. Having checked the expected weather for the day of my arrival, I learned that it would be the first snow fall of the winter that day. To those who live in that Province of Ontario, that snow will herald that 'Christmas is Coming' much more than any countdown you hear on the radio.

I have recently noticed as I take a cursory glance at the windows of travel agents, that there is a lot of advertising for family packages to 'see Santa in Lapland' and I was thinking that in my day you just went to Lewis's in Glasgow. Things have changed. Shops are being filled up with Christmas apparel the day after Halloween and you and I are encouraged to be buying for the season well in advance.

As a minister, Christmas is always a time for concern. I realise that it is a time when everyone wants to sing the familiar carols again, maybe even a few times over the season. Therefore you have to make time and space for that. I overheard someone say just a few days ago, that they love to hear the Christmas story read from the old King James Version of the Bible because it gives them a sense that using these words, makes Christmas feel 'real'. To that person the newer versions just don't feel like the 'real' Christmas story.

It is for me a time, when you realise that there is not much that I can say in preaching that is new, or original or sometimes even fresh about the Christmas story. There again, I do not believe people want anything different, other than to hear the same story told afresh right in the heart of the Christmas season.....that God loved us enough that He came down in the person of Jesus, putting on human skin, and through his life, death and resurrection gives all of us an eternal hope.

May your Christmas be a Happy one

***Roy and Christine***

# Worship Diary

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*Normal Sunday Services are held at 11.00 am. Once a month, there is an evening service, including prayers for healing. A short mid-week service is held on Thursdays at 10.30 am.*

*Special services between now and the next issue of St John's News will include:*

**December 5 (Advent 2)** 11:00 am - ***Christmas Communion***  
7:00 pm - ***Joint Evening Communion*** with Kirkton at St Johns

**9** 7:00 pm - ***Bereavement Service*** at St Andrew's Church

**12 (Advent 3)** 11:00 am - ***Service Of Christmas Praise*** with special guests, ***SHINE***  
7:00 pm - ***Christian Aid Service*** at Kirkton Church

**19 (Advent 4)** 9:30 am - ***Christmas Breakfast***  
11:00 am - ***Family Christmas Service***

**24 (Christmas Eve)** 11:00 pm - ***Midnight Round The Manger***

**26** 11:00 am - ***Christmas Sunday Service***

**January 2** 11:00 am - ***Joint Service*** at St. Johns

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\* **Sacrament of Holy Communion** \*  
\* will be held on Sunday, 6 March 2011. \*  
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# Pastoral Care

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A couple of years ago, the Kirk Session agreed that Elders would no longer make regular visits to church members in their “Elder’s district”. The reasons for this included the need to target, more effectively, visiting to those who needed it most. Every member of the congregation was asked a simple question: “Do you want an Elder to visit on a regular basis?” There were no criteria set as to who would be visited. It was left to the members to decide for themselves. At the time, the greater part of the congregation told us they did not want a regular visit.

Now, two years on, it might be that some of you who originally told us you did not want a regular visit have had a change of heart. If this is the case, please contact **Jack Battison** on 772461, who will be pleased to arrange a visit for you.

# Used Stamps

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This is a reminder to save your used stamps especially at Christmas. There is a box all year round at the front of the Church for depositing these. The stamps should have a minimum of 7mm/0.25 inch of the envelope left around each edge. The stamps have all to be cut to this size before being sent to World Mission, so if you have the time to do this it would be helpful. If not we will continue to do this for you. The money raised goes to a different project each year, This year it is going to The Girls Hostel at St Columba’s in Sialkot which accommodates up to 400 girls while they study. As well as accommodation, girls receive supervised study. Christian education, and access to a computer lab. The girls come from poor Christian communities in rural Punjab where there are limited opportunities for education. Recently, food and utility costs have increased, putting additional strain on the hostel’s budget.

Thank you to everyone who supports this project.

God Bless

**Greta & John Stratton**

# Information Update Form

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*Are you about to change your name and/or address?*

Please take a moment to complete, then return this form. You can hand it in at the door any Sunday morning, or post it to the church (see the inside back page for the address).

You can also email your details to [office@carluke-stjohns.org.uk](mailto:office@carluke-stjohns.org.uk)

My current details are:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Forename(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My changed details are/will be:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Forename(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

email address: \_\_\_\_\_

# Christian Aid

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The Haiti earthquake in January 2010 left thousands of families without homes. Many of those left homeless have sought shelter with family members or friends living in rural areas in Haiti. Homes are being shared, and families devastated by the impact of the disaster are helping one another to rebuild their lives.

Christian Aid supports families forced from their homes in places as varied as the Thailand-Burma border and Sudan. This Christmas, we are asking you to give generously to support our work with people displaced by conflict or natural disasters, all over the world.

## Christian Aid in Haiti

Christian Aid is working with seven partner organisations across Haiti to support vulnerable families who have lost everything following the earthquake. We are providing food and shelter for those left homeless; healthcare and counselling for those injured and traumatised by the disaster; and we are distributing seeds and fertilizer to poor farmers, to allow them to take advantage of the planting season and provide food for their families. Thanks to your generous donations we are reaching thousands of the most vulnerable families in Haiti and giving them the support they need to rebuild their lives.

## Families Reunited

When the earthquake struck, **Rosemund Ernest** was at home, several hours from the epicentre of the quake. Although she was so far away, she saw her home collapse. Afraid of aftershocks, she slept in the open for many nights afterwards. A friend has now loaned Rosemund a room, which she shares with her five children and seven grandchildren, ever since they arrived from Port-au-Prince several days after the quake.



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As a member of a local women's organisation, Rosemund received cash grants from Christian Aid partner **KORAL**, and this allowed her to buy food for her family members. 'When I received the money, it was like paradise. The cash allowed me to feed my family. I can't send them to school yet, but at least we can eat.'

Please give to our Christmas appeal to support families forced from their homes all over the world.

- **£5** could pay for food for a refugee on the Thailand-Burma border for a month.
- **£20** could pay for materials necessary to prepare a shelter for a family on the Thailand- Burma border.
- **£49** could pay for one blackboard for a school in southern Sudan.
- **£100** could pay for a child displaced by the earthquake in Haiti to return to school, providing school fees, uniforms and books.

### **How to give**

Online: [www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal)

Text HOME to 70007. Text will cost £3, of which Christian Aid receives an average of £2.70.



# David McLeod

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The Probus Club, which meets fortnightly in our Church hall, recently held their 25th Anniversary dinner in Cartland Bridge Hotel.

During the evening, **David McLeod** was presented with an Honorary Member's Certificate for meritorious service to the Club. The significance of this award is highlighted by the fact that only four other members have been made Honorary Members in the Club's 25 year history.



*Photograph by Bob Copeland LRPS,CPAGB*

David joined the Probus Club in December 1986 and was quickly voted into the office of Treasurer, which he held for two years. He was elected Vice President in 1992 and held the office of Club President in the 1992/93 session.

Over the years, David has participated in all aspects of the Club's business and continues to serve and support the Probus Club. David is pictured receiving his award from Colin Johnston, Vice-President of the Club.

# Lupus Coffee Morning

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On the 23rd October my family and I held a coffee morning to raise funds for Lupus UK.

I would like to thank everyone who helped and gave donations of home-baking. We raised a total of £1600 on the day and my employer Boots Pharmacy also gave a donation of £500 giving a fantastic total of £2100. My family and I were very touched by the amazing support we received from you, we are very blessed to be part of such a wonderful Church family.

I have now lived with Lupus for around three years and over that time have needed a lot of support, particularly from my close family. When I was first diagnosed my life changed dramatically. There have been some tough times over the years but we've got through them together. I am now on a treatment regime which seems to be effective at controlling my Lupus - most of the time! However the drawback to my drug treatment is that my immune system is drastically reduced which leaves me vulnerable to picking up infections.

Although there is currently no cure all the money raised from the coffee morning will go to Lupus UK which is a national charity providing vital support for patients, raising awareness of Lupus and also providing funding for important research into hopefully one day finding a cure.

Once again thank you all very much for your support.

Gillian Forrest

*Further information about Lupus UK and its work can be found on their website: [www.lupusuk.org.uk](http://www.lupusuk.org.uk)*



# Thank you, St John's

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The morning of Sunday 12th September was a bit different for me - rather than sitting at the organ in St Johns, I was lying in a hospital bed in Edinburgh, cradling my newly born daughter, Elise Kenmuir Hobson. She was born at 6.06am, weighting in at a chubby 7lb, 15½ oz, and, of course, looking like the most beautiful creation Russell and I had ever set eyes upon.

Its almost three months later now and its fair to say that we have been blessed with a lovely, 'good' baby... so far! She certainly is a very healthy and contented wee girl and our lives are filled with the joy she brings us. Her grandparents seem pretty taken with her too!

Many of you have met her as she's already been to five Sunday morning services, three of which she slept through (no offence Roy!). She seems to really enjoy the organ and piano music - hardly surprising considering she heard it from within me for nine months! I'd like to thank Christine and David for taking over the musical reigns in my absence - I hear they did a great job and I'm sure it would have been a refreshing change. I am now, however, firmly back at my post, (for better or worse!) and delighted to be there, now with my little cherub in tow. I just hope she doesn't create too much havoc in the crèche!

I'd like to thank you all for your kind wishes and the lovely basket of baby goodies presented to me shortly before Elise was born - they keep her smelling as sweet as she looks. We received so many lovely gifts for Elise - she will be 'pretty in pink' for at least the next year! Unfortunately I discovered after one Sunday service that I had a package without a gift tag - it was a little pink hand-knitted cardigan, hat and gloves. So if it was you that went to all that trouble with the knitting needles please do let me know.

I remember as a young child sitting watching my mum playing the organ on occasional Sunday mornings... how times change!

Fiona Hobson

# Youth Church

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Our Link Group had a very successful sponsored sleepover in the church hall on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June and raised a fantastic amount of £195.00 for three charities, Peruvian Floods, CHAS and Friends of Malawi. Link members also made up small food hampers and delivered them to some of our elderly church members who are not now as able to attend. We know that these were very gratefully received and the visits were very much appreciated.

Other donations made by Youth Church recently have been to Vol-Nepal (Catherine Barthram), Pakistan Floods and Calls For Heroes. We are always very grateful for all collections received from the children and are delighted that these have been able to help so many people in very different circumstances to ourselves.

On Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> December our senior Sunday School will be catering for Time for Fellowship and some home baking will be available to enjoy with your tea and coffee. There will also be some Christmas cards and crafts that can be purchased. Proceeds made on the day will be split between the Lupus Fund and children in Malawi (both of these charities being suggested by the children).

Our Christmas party this year will be on Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> December from 3pm - 5pm and we are all hopeful that a special person will be able to take some time out of his busy schedule to come along and meet the children around 4.30p.m.

Finally, on behalf of all Youth Church I wish everyone a very pleasant Christmas and thank all youth church staff for their continued dedication and commitment.

Janice Ord

# Scottish Bible Society

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## *Reports from Word at Work Autumn edition, "Faith During Recession"*

### **The Gulf**

Hrayr Jebejian, General Secretary of the Society in the Gulf, has previously visited Scotland to describe outreach among the region's enormous migrant workforce. The recession has meant, notably in Dubai, lower demands for property and fewer tourists with a knock on effect for workers. Hrayr sketches the human cost and how vulnerable people are finding hope in God's word.

As the global meltdown hit the Gulf many construction projects were postponed or cancelled. It's claimed that as many as 600 were being laid off daily. 3,000 vehicles were abandoned outside Dubai's international airport by expatriates who preferred to flee rather than risk prison for defaulting on loans. However, most of the illegal immigrants who arrived on visit visas and disappeared without work permits were at the mercy of their employers as they could not return home without valid documents. Trapped without income or escape, both men and women have committed suicide.

Conditions in labour camps are atrocious, but the Bible Society, in partnership with local churches, has been able to visit and distribute MegaVoice players that contain scripture portions in various languages, and hold bible studies and prayer groups.

For 2010 the BSG has planned to reach out to migrant workers through the distribution of 40,000 bibles, New Testaments and CDs in Arabic, Tigrinya, Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Nepali, Sinhala, Tagalog, and other languages.

People need the Word of God and the assurance that some-one beside God still cares for them. They need to see there is hope for a better tomorrow in spite of uncertainties and the economic depression. Through bible engagement and distribution programmes it is hoped that people will no longer feel lonely rejected and neglected but will experience the hope, light and love of Jesus Christ.

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## **Bethany Christian Fellowship**

Here in Scotland, what is being done to help those experiencing similar despair? In Scotland today relationship breakdown, within marriages, friendships and communities is the main cause of people finding themselves homeless.

People from all walks of life are coming for help with issues which could lead to homelessness, physical and mental health problems, unemployment, addiction, poverty, but most commonly relationship breakdown.



The current economic downturn is having an added impact. As businesses and organisations cut costs and reduce staffing, more and more families and individuals become homeless.

Nevertheless, Bethany Christian Fellowship has developed Care Shelters and simple and successful ways to support people to establish networks of supportive relationships, get their lives back on track and build a future as part of their local community.

The Bethany challenge says.

We need to change the basis of our relationships such that we know and care for each other in our communities ... where the difficulties one person experiences are shared and dealt with locally among friends, while they are still difficulties and before they grow into crisis.

"Whatever you did...you did it for me" As we work together in putting love, grace mercy and compassion into practice we demonstrate the Gospel of Christ all across the country.

# Bible Reflection

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*So here is what I want you to do, God helping you; take your everyday ordinary life - and place it before God as an offering.*

*Romans 12v1, The Message*

Worship is about what we offer to God. If we view our everyday life as an offering, as our offering offered to God, then this has the potential to have a transforming effect on everything we do. For those of us who work, whether paid or unpaid, our work and the way we do our job is part of our worship. That means:

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...it is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

*Colossians 3*

If we worship God wherever we find ourselves, whatever our circumstances, whatever our job, our attitude to work can be transformed.

Since I am serving God, it means my patience should be like his. Since I am serving God, when I am tempted to skimp, it is God I am cheating.

When things are great my perspective changes - my thankfulness for a good project delivered, a good appointment made, a budget met, is thankfulness to God. Whatever the job you have, whether your employer regards it as important or not, God does, because He calls you to serve Him there with all your heart.

For those of us who seek and need a better work/life balance, if we consider our work as our worship, this can help us. For when we consciously bring our work as an offering to God, we must bring all of our everyday life to Him. If all we have to offer is work, imagine God saying, "Where is the family? The time for your mother? Playing with your kids? Keeping fit?"

Every day may we offer our work to God as our worship.

**Ruth Walker**

# Time for Fellowship

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This year we have given financial contributions to the Murrays at the OMF Kwai River Christian Hospital and the Ideal Home in Nepal. This has only been possible through the generous donations you have made each week at Time for Fellowship.

It is lovely to see so many of the congregation coming round to the Large Hall after morning worship to share in fellowship with one another over a cup of tea or coffee.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the ladies who volunteer to help each week. Without this team, it would be difficult to organise Time for Fellowship. Especial thanks to Kay, who is always there when I am unavailable.

Finally, I would welcome new helpers onto the team as, with other commitments, our numbers have dropped. If anyone could spare the time to help for about an hour after the morning service, as part of a rota, please phone me on 750915.

Yours in Christ

Moira Braynion.



**Christian Aid's**  
**Festival of Christmas Praise**  
in  
**Kirkton Church**  
on  
**Sunday 12th December at 7.00pm**  
with  
**Special Guests - Law Primary School Choir**  
*A warm welcome is extended to everyone to come along  
and join in the festive praise.  
Refreshments afterwards.*

# Jar of Grace

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*You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God*

*2 Corinthians 9:11*

We spend a lot of time complaining about our weather, don't we? And then news from countries suffering the horrendous effects of climate change, of tsunamis, of flooding, of earthquakes reaches us and our weather doesn't seem quite so bad.

Over the past few years the Church of Scotland congregations in Carlisle have responded most generously to UNICEF's Jar of Grace appeals. This year we will be supporting UNICEF's work with vulnerable children in two areas of the world - in Pakistan and in Guyana.

We all remember the reports last summer of the devastating flooding in Pakistan but did you know that over 18 million people were affected by the floods, including nearly 8.6 million children, and over 2 million children under 5? Indeed the number of people who needed emergency assistance was bigger than the number affected by the 2004 Tsunami, the earthquake in Haiti and the last Pakistan earthquake combined. We no longer hear much about the Pakistan floods in the news and but that does not mean that all is well now. UNICEF is working hard to help families rebuild their lives and urgently needs our support.

In Guyana in South America the problem is different but no less serious. Changes in rainfall and the resulting floods and droughts are making it difficult for children to get to school and harder for them to find clean water. Changes in temperatures and rainfall are also causing crops to fail and making it harder to find nutritious food. UNICEF is already helping children in Guyana but needs our help to do even more.

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These are just a few of the ways in which UNICEF is working with the people of Guyana:

- **schools** are being supported to build systems to collect rain-water;
- **health centres** are being built and equipped to help provide suitable health care to even the most remote areas;
- **communities** are being educated about climate change and how to deal with its effects.

For anyone who doesn't know about the Jar of Grace, please let me explain:

- after Christmas you will be given a leaflet giving information about the appeal;
- this leaflet has a label which you detach and stick onto an empty jar;
- before you eat each meal, in thanks for the food you are about to eat, you are asked to put a coin into your Jar of Grace;
- after Easter the money you have put into your jar will be collected and sent to UNICEF.

If you would like to work with UNICEF to help the children of Pakistan and Guyana please look out for the leaflets which will be available after Christmas from myself.

Many thanks once again - in anticipation!

**Chris Shanks**

# News from the Murrays

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In his August Newsletter, Scott reported that, despite the horrendous conditions and limited resources with which he has to work, and the appalling condition in which some patients arrive at the hospital, all patients who had been operated on have survived surgery without complications.

One woman arrived with her part-born child's legs dangling from her, the baby having got stuck in a breach birth. With no time to perform a Caesarean section, Scott successfully delivered the baby - the first he had delivered in 25 years!

A young man, shot in shoulder and chest, took a month to reach the hospital from Burma, but left, his wounds treated. Another Burmese man walked for 6 days with a burst bowel to the hospital. With no antibiotics to treat his infections, Scott thought he would die but, through prayer, he survived.

The equipment is very old and keeps breaking down and supplies are very short. At one time, all 3 X-ray machines were out of use. They ran out of a particular type of suture and had to resort to fishing line to stitch up patients. They were down to the last 5 pairs of surgical gloves in Scott's size when a donation of 25 more pairs of the correct size arrived.

Their second-hand anaesthetic machine developed a leak, which Scott repaired using a piece of wire and bubble gum. The machine was successfully used with 15 patients over 4 days after the repair.

Nok has started working in the hospital, training Nurse Aides and helping with admin. She cleared out 10 years of accumulated junk, rats and snakes from the laundry. They are now looking for an industrial washing machine since all washing is currently being done by hand.

Scott asks for our prayers: That the changes they are introducing will be accepted; that their learning of 3 local languages will be quick; that the endless list of duties which have to be attended to daily are successfully dealt with.

The Retiral Offering at the Watchnight Service will be dedicated to the Murrays work in the Kwai River Christian Hospital.

# Property Report

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2010 has again been a busy year for the property team covering a range of items. I have separated these into their various categories and only listed the main items under each heading.

## Decoration

Disabled toilet painted; Kitchen Papered and painted; Walls at front fire door painted; Exterior of Manse painted.

## Health & Safety

Smoke Alarms fitted in all toilets; Pat testing of electrical equipment carried out; New Emergency Exit Lights and Signs installed; Toilet door in vestry changed to a sliding door.

## Upgrade

Old cooker replaced with a rated modern unit; Wall behind cooker tiled by Jim Braynion; Warning light to highlight power cuts installed; Additional Radiator installed in large hall; Gutter between halls modified to reduce leakage potential; Copping fitted above front fire exit emergency door; Self closing taps fitted in Toilets.

## Interior Maintenance

Kick panels fitted to doors in small hall; Floor repaired at Fire exit; New clocks fitted in both halls; Boilers Serviced; Crèche was plastered, painted & Carpeted.

## Exterior Maintenance

Overhanging trees on rear path cut back; Weeds killed in Area adjacent to boiler house; Rear path and fire escape pressure washed; Hedges cut.

None of the above work could have been achieved without the help of a number of members giving their time and skills willingly. Both I and the Congregation would like to thank Alex Forrest, Ken Mackie, Glenn Walker, George Reid, Alastair McGillivray and the many others who do numerous smaller items which greatly assist with the up-keep of the buildings.

John Stratton  
Property Convenor

# Zen and the Art of Pooch Maintenance

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After coming back to reasonable regular attendance at St John's, I have been surprised by the "Feed Back" about my return to the fold from people I meet when exercising the Mutt.

This fascinates me because I am not a Prodigal Son, I am just a guy who has come to know where I belong. I have never been a "Joiner" of Clubs, with the exception of The British Academy of Film and Television, which was, and still is, useful to my passion, and that passion to maintain the quality and responsibility of Broadcasting to fellow human beings.

How pompous, I can hear you cry!! Well, that is me! I can't help myself getting very angry about the general dumbing down of standards in life. I want to add, at this point, that I really welcomed my chance to watch St John's Broadcasters at work, providing the Visual Aids on the screens. I certainly wish I could be part of that great team, but my life in retirement has become even busier with the myriad requests from ex colleagues who are still employed and are constantly seeking my help, which I am glad to give them. I will never forget how much concern and dedication I saw that Sunday morning. There was a little glitch at one point, but I did remind the two stalwarts of the saying from another branch of faith "Only Allah weaves a PERFECT Carpet"

Anyway, I digress. So why do I feel that I have "Come Home"? Simple question, difficult answer! I asked myself this question the other day when Benny and I were, yet again, negotiating the Organic Minefield of carelessly discarded dog mess and broken Buckfast Bottles in the park. That is just how my mind works. I, like everyone else, need to feel that I belong somewhere. And this has nothing to do with having a fashionable address, the latest designer clothing, and the best that "Ikea" has to offer surrounding me at home.

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Belonging is for me so very like the attitude of Benny. He belongs where I am. I feel I belong where Jesus is. But I can't leave him at the front door of St John's in Hamilton Street. He is with me where ever I am. Now that can be scary! Especially when I lose my temper at Benny for wanting to play with his latest Squeaky Toy, particularly when I want to sit down and read. I know that Benny gets the message as I apologise for my short temper, but I especially give that apology to the man from Galilee. He keeps me sane in a crazy world.

In closing, my attempt to forgive others was sorely tested last winter when some of the less responsible local youngsters broke one of our windows with a veritable deluge of snowballs. I was so angry that I totally lost my "Cool" and, still in my slippers, ran after them through the snow. How crazy was that. As the community Police officer who responded to my call said. "You were Mad to try that." Why did I do it? Because I lost my link to JC. What is a broken window when compared to what he went through? And he forgave those who perpetrated those barbaric acts. Perhaps, after many more years of walking the dog, I may find the answer... I will certainly keep trying.

JF

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## **Gift Aid**

**Would members who Gift Aid their offering or other donations please remember to put their name on any such donations.**

**We cannot claim back tax if we do not know who gave made the donation!**

