

The **Methodist** Church in Scotland



In Touch

Issue 5 Spring 2016

Edinburgh &
Forth

Strathclyde

Ayrshire &
Renfrewshire

Central

North of
Scotland

Angus
Dundee &

Inverness

Dear Friends,

When we first started to prepare this edition, I thought that there wouldn't be very many articles; so I am delighted that, in the end, there are far more contributions than I expected. Not only is it good to fill this edition but I also see it as an indication that *In Touch* is becoming more widely known and are seeing it as an opportunity to share and keep 'in touch'.

Since the Christmas/New Year edition, we have had a long weekend visit from Dr. Jill Barber, the Vice President of Conference. Jill is the Director of the Englesea Brook Museum of Primitive Methodism, near Crewe and very much sees heritage as one of the means by which we can engage in the mission of the Church. It was appropriate, therefore, that she led an excellent session at Arbroath – one of only two of Wesley's octagonal churches still remaining – on Heritage and Mission. In all sorts of imaginative ways she explored with us possibilities for mission through the heritage of places and 'things'. Later that day she and I drove to Portessie where to a united congregation drawn from along the Moray coast she preached about Bethel places and people – a really thought-provoking and challenging theme. Following a lunch she went down to Glasgow where she spent her final day in the Strathclyde Circuit visiting our new Churches at Anniesland and Kilsyth and meeting the Circuit Leadership Team.

The other major piece of work has been an application for a Connexional Grant to enable us to appoint a part-time person to work with 'Churchless Christians' and 'Missing Methodists'. Those of you at the Synod in Clydebank will remember this being discussed and agreed there. We should hear in June whether or not this application to help fund this part-time appointment in partnership with Angus, Dundee and Perthshire Circuit has been successful. I am grateful to the members of the small working group that prepared the application, especially Gary Williams, one of our Training and Development Officers, whose skills and willingness to help were very much appreciated.

I shall be on sabbatical when you receive this edition, but I wish you well and look forward to seeing you all again when I return in mid-June, just before Conference.

Every blessing,

David

Helen Wareing

Most of you will now know that Helen is now no longer working for the Connexion as our Regional Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network Co-ordinator. Synod showed its gratitude for all her work over many years with a small presentation and vote of thanks.

Helen has worked faithfully for Methodism in Scotland in various guises in her time and I am sure that you would want to join with me in wishing her all the best for the future, praying that the Lord would continue to guide her and use her many gifts wherever he may lead.

Helen, thank you, on behalf of all of Scotland's Methodists, past and present.

David

Our sisters and brothers in the refugees' camps of Northern

Early morning in February we have arrived at the address in a suburban area of Dunkirk. I am driving. On our right some very pretty modern houses. On our left a wood. We check the map it is the right address. The car is full of tents. This morning I was in the *Auberge des Refugiés* warehouse preparing emergency packs for refugees. 20 minutes ago I was approached by the warehouse manager because she knew I had a car. A rental car. A very small Fiat, looking like a half walnut shell on wheels. Despite the size of the car we were able to push 12 tents for 8 people each in it. Why? Because about 50 people arrived at the camp last night and they have nowhere to sleep. It is February. The temperature is about 5 Celsius and it is sleeting. These people slept out because there is nowhere for them. We had to rush because the police don't allow vehicles into the camp and for one reason or another that morning they did not patrol at the entrance of the camp.

I saw the pictures. I watch the documentaries but I did not expect to see what I will see. When we arrived at the main gate of the



camp, we had to negotiate our way up the pavement as there is no official entrance for vehicles and we arrived in the woods.

The mud is everywhere about 10 to 20 cm deep sticky clay mud. The camp is about images of destitution. People walking with heads down on their shoulders. Ghosts. Everything is grey, black and sticky.

The lucky ones have tent the less lucky have built a shelter with planks, bin bags and anything they could find.

The camp is about noise: quietness and silence. There are about 2,500 to 3,000 people living here. Nobody knows for sure. The place is silent but driving in the car from time to time we can hear babies crying ... in the silence. The camp is about smells. 2,500 people living with only basic hygiene you can only imagine the smell hidden behind open fires fumes; the only way to warm up in the camp. I meet amazing volunteers of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities. No time for chat. All is on the hurry. A lot of British people coming over to help called by compassion and also shame. Without these volunteers we can't imagine what would happen.

The volunteers try to offer some normality especially for the very vulnerable people: children, lonely women, disabled and elderly. Not everyone can jump in a truck on the move! So those left behind are the most vulnerable. The most able will find their way at some point leaving behind them their children, pregnant woman or elderly or disabled parents. The plan is that from Britain they will find ways to help them to join them. The left behind won't be able to come so they stay stuck in camps. How many? Nobody knows. It is 2016. It is 1 hour from London.

By the way the main road in the camp is called "David Cameron road". A symbol. A joke. A sad joke.



As Christians they are what the populist media and politicians tell us. These migrants are after our jobs, social rights and an easy

life. They are dangerous. They are not like us. They have different cultures and religions. They could be criminals and terrorists. Britain one of the richest country in the world we can't afford to welcome them. There is what we are told and there is what Christ tells us; love God and Love your neighbours. The question was and is who my neighbours are. Over the year we are told during sermons that our duty is to God in Christ: Love; not statistics or politics but love.

I decided to go as a Christian leaving behind me for few days a supportive but bemused partner used to "my Calls". I took the train from Edinburgh to Calais. I contacted the *Auberge des Refugiés* and stayed as a volunteer for 5 full days. In these 5 full days I have helped at the main warehouse collecting and dispatching help. At the same time I was able to volunteer with *Médecins Sans Frontieres* in their campaign for Measle vaccination in the Camps of Calais. The experience allowed me to explore what "to respond to our neighbours' need by loving service" meant.

The Methodist church in Scotland is part of a collective called Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees. It is a Church of Scotland initiative co-funded by Action of Churches Together in Scotland. The group includes several Christian denominations but also the Muslim Council of Scotland and Interfaith Scotland. It seeks to co-ordinate and promote action by faith communities in Scotland to support asylum seekers and refugees. Their website www.sfar.org.uk is packed of useful information, updates and ideas on how to be active collectively as churches or individually. You may also want to join to conversation using their tweet @WithRefugees .

Kilsyth Methodist Church

It was on 31st May 1840 that the first Methodist Church was dedicated in Church Street Kilsyth. It was of simple structure with no porch, vestry or pews and cost £250. The church formed part of the Airdrie Circuit but as its mission became more successful it became a circuit in its own right with jurisdiction over Kirkintilloch, Campsie and

Cumbernauld. Before long it became apparent that with its success in spreading the gospel the building was too small to enable it to meet its growing responsibilities and a new building was proposed at a cost of £1684.

The new church was dedicated on 10th May 1885 and was capable of seating 436 people. This was a remarkable work of faith as the circuit membership was only 113. Moreover, there followed a period of decline and it wasn't until a visiting evangelist built up its membership with the slogan "Decide for Christ" that the church prospered: at one time there were over 300 Sunday school members.

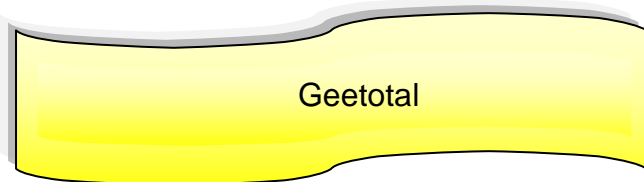
Many years passed and there were fluctuations in membership and activities. In the 1990's it became clear that the church building did not meet modern requirements for mission and the burden of repairs was sapping finances and inhibiting our true calling. It was with a heavy heart and many memories that the membership of 69 decided to relinquish the building in 2007 and to meet in rented accommodation from which our mission was able to continue through social contacts, bible study and prayer meetings although with some restrictions.

From this time there arose a vision of a new church not just as a building but as commitment to God's purpose. A search for finances to enable this vision to materialise was begun. For some time before this decision the church in Kilsyth was the only member of the original circuit, so it became expedient to join the Glasgow Circuit which subsequently morphed into the Strathclyde Circuit. Under the Superintendent, Alan Anderson the Circuit committed a substantial amount of money to a new church and this was followed by District support but this still left a substantial amount of money to be raised. Coffee mornings, requests to members and past members, as well as in more recent times the "buy a brick" campaign brought in substantial funds.

There were times when we were down hearted, especially when the Landfill Company Biffa turned down our grant

application, but our faith that God's purpose was for a new church to be built in Kilsyth carried us through. Dr Higgs of the Rank Trust visited us and was an inspiration for us to continue. Through him the Trust made a substantial contribution and he highlighted other sources of revenue. Finally the Connexion made a very generous contribution to our funds. It was during the latter part of our fund raising that momentum was created and we received substantial personal contributions to our funding. We were now in a position to invite a local builder to begin to construct our new multifunctional church which was completed on 22nd December 2015 on the same site as the original church and like that it has no vestry or porch or pews and moreover it is in the same Circuit as the Airdrie churches who are now part of the Strathclyde Circuit – there seems to be nothing and everything new in God's purpose. The new church was dedicated on 13th March 2016 at a service lead by the Chairman of the Scottish District Rev. Dr David Easton.

This is only the beginning of our mission to support the Community in Kilsyth and elsewhere, but we know that with prayer and God's blessing we will succeed.



Geetotal is a new initiative we can all take part in to help address climate change. As David Easton, Chair of the Scotland Synod and a Geetotal participant has said: "It provides a way for each of us to make a real contribution that is manageable with busy lives." Geetotal has been started by a group from Stirling Methodist Church. Get full details and express interest, sign up or ask questions at www.geetotal.org.

Jon Cape, the Stirling Church's Green Team leader gives the background.

It is natural for us to feel that the world's problems are too big for us. We discussed climate change at a recent Central Scotland Circuit get together and, from one of the

tables, exactly that thought was expressed – it's too big for us to make any difference. But is it? The global deal on climate change arrived at in Paris still has a long way to go to make it a reality. As Greenpeace commented: "This deal won't dig us out of the hole we're in, but it makes the sides less steep." Avaaz continued in this vein: "Ambitious visions like these rely on movements to make them realities in our everyday lives." Geetotal is one such movement. It joins hands with faith communities across the world helping to make the world safe for our future.

Why is this so important? Each year, world business leaders get together at Davos, Switzerland for the World Economic Forum. And each year, they commission top economists and insurance experts to carry out an assessment of global risks. This year, for the first time, climate change risks came out top of the list of concerns: not just for our long term future but right now. A failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation was seen a likely to have a bigger impact than any other global risk. And the risks are inter-connected. Zurich Insurance's chief risk officer said: "Climate change is exacerbating more risks than ever before in terms water crises, food shortages, constrained economic growth, weaker social cohesion and increased security risks."

So what does participating in Geetotal involve?

Here is a brief introduction.

Introduction to the Geetotal initiative

The purpose of the Geetotal initiative is to gather together a growing community which can help cut our dependence on dangerous greenhouse gas emissions. The 'Geetotal Commitment' is a commitment to add no more to total greenhouse gas emissions. First of all, here is a statement of the Geetotal Commitment. We look at why, how and questions in a separate document.

The Geetotal Commitment

"I am willing to join others in making the Geetotal commitment. From now on, together as a community, we commit to

adding no more to the world's total greenhouse gas emissions

For my part, I will ...

Cut

Keep the emissions resulting from my lifestyle as low as I reasonably can. I accept that choices over what is reasonable are personal and I will respect others who make different choices to me.

Offset

At least once a year, I will assess my greenhouse gas emissions and the cost of offsetting these. If I regard this cost as readily affordable for me, I will meet this cost each year. If I don't, with no names given, I will ask the Geetotal community to share this cost. If I have sufficient income I will aim to help in meeting these costs, if I feel able to do so.

Pressure

Spend a minute a month. Once a month, I will spend a minute adding my name to the Geetotal community voice which will put growing pressure on Governments, investment funds and others for responsible action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at an adequate pace.

Share

At appropriate times, I will share what I am doing with my friends and neighbours."

Jon Cape

info@geetees.org



I am the representative of the Methodist Church on the Scottish Churches Committee (SCC) appointed by the Connexion through the Law and Polity Committee (of which I am a member).

The SCC is comprised of representatives from the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, the Scottish

Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, the Baptist Union of Scotland, the United Reformed Church, the Free Church of Scotland, the United Free Church of Scotland, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Associated Presbyterian Churches and the Salvation Army.

The remit of the SCC is to monitor and comment upon proposed legislation in Scotland, particularly where such legislation has a bearing upon or relevance to the interests or views of the various churches and faith communities in Scotland.

The SCC is the equivalent in Scotland of the Churches Legislative Advisory Service which operates in relation to UK legislation emanating from Westminster – and of which the Methodist Church is a participant.

Mrs Janette Wilson, who is member of the Secretariat of the Church of Scotland based in the Church of Scotland's Offices, 121 George Street, Edinburgh, acts as Secretary to the SCC. The SCC meets about five times a year – the meetings take place in the Church of Scotland Offices in Edinburgh.

There is a Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer (SCPO) who is employed to monitor legislation, proposed legislation and consultation initiatives affecting Scotland from the Scottish Parliament and from Parliament. The SCPO presents a written report to each meeting of the SCC – for example at the November 2015 meeting of the SCC the SCPO reported the progress of the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Bill, the Footway Parking and Double Parking (Scotland) Bill, the Private Houses (Tenancies) (Scotland) Bill and the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill.

The work of the Committee is therefore very varied in participating in consultations and discussions with the Scottish government and the UK government on legislation and policy issues where the Scottish Churches have a particular concern or point of view. During the past year these have included the Duties of Charity Trustees, Charity Fundraising, draft Guidance for the Charity Test, Civil Partnership and the Scheme to

Apply Listed Building Control to Exterior of Churches in Use – The Ecclesiastical Exemption.

The Law and Polity Secretariat are kept appraised of the work of the SCC. Separately I keep the Chair of the Scotland District and the Secretary of the Scotland District Church and Society Committee informed regarding matters discussed at the SCC and the various consultation processes initiated by the Scottish government and the UK government.

The SCC is also an important source of information on the operation and implementation of legislation. It monitors publications, such as guidance notes, issued by government on legislation impacting the interests of churches in Scotland. These are then brought to the attention of the various participating churches – for example, it disseminated the Guidance on the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014.

The SCC is an important organisation for the Methodist Church to be affiliated with because it assists the church leadership in being kept informed about legislative and regulatory issues which might impact the interests of the Methodist Church in Scotland and forms a conduit to assist the Church (as part of the Christian community in Scotland) in expressing its views and influencing policy makers in collaboration with the other participating denominations.



Missional - Monastic – Mainline
(A guide to starting Missional, Micro-communities in historically mainline traditions)

Elaine A. Heath and Larry Duggins.
Cascade Books – paperback

If you missed the opportunity to hear the author Elaine Heath speak at the end of last year (2015) in Glasgow at the evening

arranged by the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network then this book is a way to be informed, challenged and inspired on how to address declining traditional church. It is a story which will be familiar for Methodists, coming as it does from authors immersed in the tradition and, despite giving a narrative rooted in America, it has contextual relevance to our own Scottish reality - taking some of its inspiration from the work of the Iona Community.

The book starts by telling some of the authors' life stories. This gives an authenticity to the definitions and examples they offer - mission (sent out discipleship) and evangelism (declaring good news) - and in terms of good practice advice and theological grounding. It is truly a God given story with practical implications – “we believe that God has initiated the pruning of the church that we now experience, so that we can be free of attachments that keep us from our missional vocation” - talking into a Methodist tradition which they see as being re-envisioned by their work; real yet prophetic; asking “what kind of message are we sending about God simply by the way we live and who we are as people”.

In two parts, the book looks first at the why of change. The second part gives a practical guide for how to build micro (small) missional (outward looking), monastic (praying – holy) communities, with traditional church “perverted by consumerism and individualism” as the spirit inspired catalyst and anchor for a Jesus- modelled new “progressive mainline” reality.

The term ‘monastic’ (not about ascetic isolationism) refers to groups who have a rule of life. This involves living together (although I am not sure residential community is essential, merely a life choice for some) and praying together - which shapes how the members of the community can better relate to the world and go about changing it for good. The rule of life, for which the book gives a worked example, is well articulated as are the practicalities of establishing, managing and providing good leadership for the micro community – all central themes in the second part of the story.

The book references early Methodist tradition of classes and bands and gives an insight into how that discipline can be reworked for our modern world. (It reminded me of the themes of Covenant Discipleship.) It offers a critique of the attractional model of church and its ecclesiology, “centred on attracting people into the church building, with the worship gathering being the centrepiece and most important activity of the week” where “discipleship happens when people are faithful participants” – “ministry is led by professionals” and its assumed importance “to make the church as likeable as possible”. It suggests that “attractional” needs to be defined differently as both/and church - moved from consumer model to being anchors for communities with a missional imagination who “follow the real Jesus and live lives that honour the Jesus of the Gospels”.

In unwrapping their work the authors recognise that the change suggested will not happen easily. It will require new ways of educating leaders and will need to expose congregations to new ideas and in experimenting around the edges. The sadness, a sentiment I can empathise with, is that many churches are not willing to change – “stuck and declining because people have forgotten how to treat one another other well” and it is a reminder that only when we learn how to live in more loving ways with each other will we be ready to be missional. It is about repentance and a willingness to change, a central gospel theme.

In its story it has echoes of the base communities of liberation theology and of pioneer ministry in the work of Fresh Expressions and Venture FX for British Methodism and the community engagement of ‘the Message Trust’ In recommending this book, despite that some may consider it as being too American, I conclude my review with this quotation which touched my heart and challenged my thinking.

“I am deeply convinced that the larger, vibrant churches of the future, the ones that will have buildings and paid staff, will not resemble the attractional/consumer churches of today. There will be fewer of them, for

one thing. But more importantly they will carry a different DNA. They will be anchors for all kinds of missional communities and initiatives in theological education for lay people. There will be large worship celebrations with great preaching, music and liturgy. But that won’t be seen as the most important things that happen in churches. Instead the defining characteristic of church will be its ability to equip and deploy ordinary Christians into the world, where they will cultivate real disciples and form alternative communities that provide a foretaste of heaven. This work will not be done to make financial profit in the anchor church. It will be done in order to co-operate with God in the mission of making all things new.”
AMEN!

Allan Loudon
Supernumerary Minister -
Ayrshire and Renfrewshire Circuit (living in Glasgow)



The small Pewter bowl comprises a traditional Celtic cross with knot work. At the centre is a simple cross representing Jesus as the centre of everything. The underside of the bowl is covered with vines representing that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. The bowl was originated on the Moray Coast. Each bowl is 3 ½ inches or 9cm in diameter and is individually crafted in Scotland by Pewtermill and comes in a fabric lined box. The dish sold at cost price plus £1 for outreach work in Scotland is £19.50. Contact Alan or Jenny 01261 821280 if you would like to purchase one. P & P included.

News from Action for Children

Today we would like to introduce you to our friends Karis Kolawole and Stuart Laurie from leading children's charity Action for Children.

Karis is Head of Church Partnerships and leads on the charity's partnership with the Methodist Church and other faiths. Prior to this, she spent almost 20 years in the Civil Service where she worked in various roles covering public policy, corporate communications and project management. Currently, she is exploring how the charity can work more closely with the Methodist Church.

Stuart is the Community Fundraiser for Scotland and is responsible for ensuring that Action for Children continues to develop its fundraising activity through a range of community based activities across Scotland. His role involves raising awareness in communities through work with local services, school children, student groups, churches, local businesses and community groups.

In other news, the charity marked sixty years of work in Scotland on Wednesday 18th November 2015 with a special event at the Scottish Parliament. It was in 1955 that Action for Children Scotland, then known as National Children's Home, launched its first Scottish service when Cathkin House in Rutherglen opened its doors to support 30 children. Now, Action for Children Scotland operates 87 services across Scotland, annually supporting 14,000 disadvantaged children and young people.

Supporters from far and wide were invited along to enjoy the evening's celebrations, with David Easton, Sue Langdale and Gill Nunn from the Methodist Church in attendance. Additionally, there was speeches from host MSP Anne McTaggart and Scottish Government Minister for Children and Young People Aileen Campbell MSP.

The Methodist Church has provided many forms of support over the years, with tailor-made initiatives such as Action for Children Sunday and our Home Collection Boxes (League of Light lanterns). This year we would like to invite every Methodist Church in Scotland to hold their own Action for Children Sunday Service in celebration of the work we do. All worship materials and additional information are available by contacting Stuart at stuart.laurie@actionforchildren.org.uk.

We are also looking to grow our number of Home Collection Box holders and we would welcome any new Home Collection Box secretaries to work alongside Stuart. If you are able to commit your support in this way then please let Stuart know.

Karis would also like to invite anyone who is interested in volunteering or campaigning for Action for Children to contact her at karis.kolawole@actionforchildren.org.uk. She also extends an invite to anyone attending the Methodist Church conference from 30 June to 7 July to stop by at the charity's market stall and fringe event to say hello.

News from Inverness



"At the Morning Service in Inverness Methodist Church on 14th February 2016, Reverend John Beadle, Superintendent Minister, presented Professor Ken MacKinnon with a certificate to mark his 60th anniversary as a Methodist Local Preacher on Full Plan. Ken, a self-taught Gaelic speaker and sociolinguistics expert, lives on the Black Isle."

200 Years Old
and Eight Years Young!

Our church, The City of Edinburgh Methodist Church, was formed in 2008 from four previous congregations in the city: Abbeyhill, Edinburgh Methodist Mission (Central Hall), Leith and Nicolson Square. Joint worship began at Pentecost and the new church council was instituted in September of the same year.

We tend to celebrate our church anniversary in May to reflect the time when we first came together rather than our formal 'birthday'. This follows a long tradition of choosing a time to suit ourselves. In the 19th century Nicolson Square held its anniversaries variously in May, June, September and even December!

The Edinburgh Methodist Mission marked the Centenary of the Mission in 1988 and the Centenary of the Central Hall in 2001. Abbeyhill marked their Centenary in 1986 and Leith the Golden Anniversary of their building in 1983. Equally we could celebrate the first visit of Wesley to Scotland (1751), the first Methodist Chapel in Edinburgh (1765), the first building to be owned by Leith Methodists (1815) and the date on the front of the church at Nicolson Square (1815).



The back of the building looking into the Well Cafe. (Photo copyright Andrew Lee)

So you might ask 'Why haven't we celebrated 250 years of Methodism in Edinburgh, and both Leith and Nicolson Square's 200th birthdays this year, in 2015?' Well, one reason is that Methodism has actually been around in both Edinburgh and

Leith for longer than 250 years and in fact came to Scotland in advance of John Wesley's visit. Wesley came at the invitation of a Methodist soldier, Benjamin Gallatin, who was stationed in Musselburgh at the time. (The trip was against the advice of John's brother Charles and his friend George Whitfield, who had already preached in Scotland).



A historical line drawing of Nic Square plus a Wesley booklet

Coming back to our present home here in Edinburgh, the building of the church at Nicolson Square was quite protracted and it wasn't until May 1816 that the building was completed. 100 years later a similar pattern followed with the Epworth Halls, begun in 1915, and opened November 1916.

Next year, therefore, will be the 200th anniversary of the Nicolson Square church building and the 100th of the Epworth Halls but as a church community we will only be eight!

These anniversaries do seem worth marking in some way. We have decided that where we are currently, and how we love God and each other now, is very important. So next year, in 2016, we will celebrate being 200 years old but also being eight years young. We recognise that wherever we come from, our heritage helps us to achieve what we do today in God's name.

We are planning a series of events to celebrate together, with the Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Jill Barber coming for our Anniversary Weekend of 28-29 May. A date to put into your diaries now – all are welcome! We will probably plan another

event around the weekend of 5-6 November to mark the centenary of the Epworth Halls.

As a congregation, we are looking for new ways in which we can mark these staging posts in our journey together. It doesn't matter how long someone has been part of our church family – let's face it none of us are 200 years old!



Deacon Belinda Letby and Rev Dr George Grubb, former Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, cutting a cake to celebrate the official opening of newly-refurbished buildings at Nicolson Square in 2014

by Alison Butler

Dundee Methodists 'link up' with Bulgaria

The congregation at Dundee Marketgait, have recently been enjoying their morning service linked up with the United Methodist Church in Sevlievo, Bulgaria.

This 'link up' has been made possible thanks to Computers, Information Technology and Local Preacher Julya Walsh, who moved and set up a new home with her husband Chris in Dobromirka, Bulgaria in June 2014. Julya has been keen to explore this technology link up with Dundee as part of her ongoing development as a local preacher. Following 3 previous 'link ups' over the last 12 months, on Sunday 3rd January this year Julya conducted the whole of our Morning Service,

together with local preacher Keith Pearson who was in place in Marketgait, just in case there was a difficulty with the internet connection - although this has never been a problem. The pastor of the Church in Sevlievo, Margarita Torodova, allows Julya to use the internet connection at the Church which is more reliable than in some of the towns and villages.



Due to the time difference of the Church Services, this link up has just been on a one way basis, with Julya leading our morning service at Marketgait while she sits in the church office in Sevlievo and accompanied by the pastor Margarita, who always greets our congregation at the end of the service. If we can arrange and overcome the two hour time difference in our service times, Margarita is also very keen to develop this computer link up and is exploring a way we can bring both congregations together for a joint service – we are all looking forward to this at Dundee.

I understand that Julya has recently attended a Local Preachers meeting via 'Skype' - how wonderful that such Computer technology can bring our churches, preachers and congregations closer together.

Graham Pickthall
Church Steward
Dundee Methodist Church

Vice President's Visit

Over the last weekend in February, Dr Jill Barber, the Vice President of the Methodist Conference visited our District. Jill is a professional archivist and the Director of the Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism. It was fitting, therefore, that her first engagement was to lead an afternoon on Heritage and Mission in our Arbroath Church – one of the two octagonal Methodist churches in Britain open by Wesley himself. Jill spoke about her passion to see heritage as a means of mission and encouraged us to look 'outside the box' at possibilities for each of us.

Following that event she and the Chair drove up to the Moray coast where he led and a Jill preached in Portessie at a united service drawn from the five coast churches. The Vice President, using the story of Jacob's vision of

heaven at Bethel, shared some of her experiences during her year in office and encouraged us to recognise 'Bethel moments' and 'Bethel people' in our lives.

Following a lunch in the hall at Portessie, we drove down to Glasgow, where Jill spent the last day of her visit in the Strathclyde Circuit visiting the newly-opened church at Anniesland and the soon-to-be opened one in Kilsyth.* In the evening she met and reflected with the Circuit Leadership Team.

We were delighted with her visit and all who met her were impressed by her enthusiasm, obvious commitment to the gospel and her clear vision for the Church.

David.

*The Kilsyth Church opened with a great service of praise and dedication on the afternoon of Sunday March 13th.



Vice President in Portessie

COME WANDER!

A district walk open to all on Saturday 25th June 2016
Walking from Glasgow OR Govan to finish
for refreshments at Paisley Central Hall

The full distance is about 13.5 miles, so it will be an all-day walk,
but there is an opportunity for people to pick up the walk at
Govan Old Church (making the walk to Paisley about 9 miles).
Glasgow, Govan and Paisley can all be accessed by public transport.

Further details, including where and when to meet, will be circulated in May,
but do note the date now if you would like to share in exercise and fellowship
with others from around the Methodist Church in Scotland.

You will need to bring a packed lunch.

To register your interest and to receive more information directly as soon as it
is available please contact Jill Baker or Janet McKerral
(ejillbaker@btinternet.com or janet.mckerral@btinternet.com)

District Dates 2016

May	3	EMU Meeting	(Edinburgh)
	3 - 6	Diaconal Convocation	
	16 - 19	District Chairs' Retreat	(Cumbria)
	24	Wesley Day	
June	8	Regional Learning & Development Forum	(Glasgow)
	15	ACTS Members Meeting	
	17 - 19	Solas Festival	(Perth)
	30 - 1	Conference - Presbyteral Session	(London)
July	3	Conference - Ordination Services	(London)
	2 - 7	Conference - Representative Session	(London)
Autumn	24	District Executive Meeting	(Stirling)
	30	Safeguarding Group	(Dunblane)
September	10	Synod	(Inverness)

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue of "In Touch"
If you would like to submit an article to the Autumn issue, please send to Fiona Inglis at
fiona@methodistchurch.plus.com by Monday 1st August
Please continue to check our website for updates www.methodistchurchinscotland.net/