

OUR VISION

**Our vision is to be a living, caring church
at the heart of our communities -
celebrating worship, offering support.**



**HOLYTOWN PARISH CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND**

SEPTEMBER 2015

Dear Friends,

While walking along the road with Graham one sunny morning during our recent holiday my eyes were suddenly drawn to the pavement a few feet in front of me where it appeared something quite large and unusual was glinting in the early morning sunlight - something we had not seen the previous day.

However, as I moved closer to the spot from where the glinting appeared to be coming, it seemed to disappear!

Well, my curiosity was aroused - for I am sure Largs is not usually known for having great mirages due to sunlight!!

So I deemed that we had to stop our walk and investigate this phenomenon!

At first it was indeed quite difficult to locate the exact location of the glimmering and so there was much to-ing and fro-ing on the pavement by Graham and myself as we tried to re-position ourselves in such a way as to make sure the sun was in the right position to once more reveal what we had seen.

And yes - it did draw some strange looks from motorists and indeed some weird conversations with fellow walkers as they passed us by!!

However we were determined to find what had caught my eye and regardless of what others may have thought we decided to continue our search!

Thankfully however, at just the right moment the sun came out

once more from behind the clouds and in so doing highlighted this shining spectacle again which allowed us, with all our manoeuvring back and forwards to exactly locate the source of the glimmering and the mystery was solved.

There before us on the pavement was a wonderful work of art - an elaborate snail trail - but a snail trail like no other we had ever seen!

For not only did it cover a huge area of the pavement but it was also a trail that looked like it had been made by what could only be described as a drunken snail!

It did indeed start in a fairly straight line from the grass verge but then on closer inspection we could find no other straight line in the trail at all!

The trail simply went round and round and round in circles continually going back on itself, then moving forward a little and then once more back on itself - sometimes in large circles, sometimes in small, sometimes in concentric circles!

What a tremendous amount of work this little snail had done, what a long journey it had been on, what a wonderful trail it had left - a thing of great beauty - but you couldn't help thinking had it just gone in a straight line and not continually round in circles how much shorter its journey would have been - and how much energy it would have saved!

You know I think sometimes we do exactly the same in our lives and church lives - sometimes it would just be so much quicker and so much easier and so much less exhausting to just take the straight path, to make a decision, to take a

particular route regardless - in order to reach a particular destination that we seek.

Yet we too sometimes go round and round in circles - we move forward a little, then back, we revisit what we should leave behind, then move on a little further forward, then we revisit again what we should leave behind and so it goes on.

Now while this may be frustrating for some, maybe even difficult to understand - or watch for others, sometimes it is a necessary process to ensure we are heading in the right direction.

It is a process that allows us to reflect and where necessary move on or indeed if needed backtrack a little and re-assess just where we are heading.

The start of a new session is always a good time to do this - to take time to re-assess our lives, our church life and see just where we are on that journey. However, whether we are travelling in straight lines or circles at the moment - in all we do here in our parishes - we have a destination - and whatever way we seek to reach that destination we too in sharing God's love should be creating a thing of great beauty just as beautiful as did that snail!

Blessings
Caryl

SUMMER SERVICES

I hope you have all enjoyed the experience of worshipping together over the summer months!

Certainly all the comments to me have been very positive and you all seem to have enjoyed not just worshipping together but also meeting with others from the linkage and sharing fellowship time together after worship.

I have to say my most frequently received comment was nothing to do with my series on love - although someone did say that it was the first time anyone had preached to them on lust! - but rather how wonderful the singing was and how much they had enjoyed worshipping together because the singing was so good!

It has certainly been great for me to have everyone together and I think everything worked out well for getting people to and from church.

I would just like to say a personal thank you to all who have supported this new initiative and made it such a wonderful experience for so many people. Thank you to all who did ferry people home after worship allowing them to share fellowship. And a huge thank you to all who provided tea and coffee each week to allow us to share fellowship time together after the service.

THANK YOU!

In light of my Pastoral letter above - I think we have moved forward quite a bit and moved forward in a straight line!!

Blessings
Caryl

FLOWER LIST

Sept	13	S Connell
	20	M McIlroy
	27	J Bell
Oct	4	J Hutchison

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS

Recently a paper had the heading "Lions in the Bible". Did you know that "lions" are mentioned one hundred times in the Bible? Lions are not the only animals to be found. Here are a few you can look up for yourselves.

1 Samuel 17:37 - two animals are mentioned.

Matthew 29:23-24 - another animal you have sung about.

Exodus 8:1-15 for a story about a small animal.

Leviticus 11:29-35 - Here you can learn about some of the rules about food which were given to the Israelites.

TRIP TO CARLISLE

The bus for the outing to Carlisle will leave the Michael Sherry Centre at 10.00 am on Saturday 19th September.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Advance notice: We shall be having a Christmas Dinner in the Hall on Friday 11th December. More information will be

given later.

THE GUILD

The new Session of The Guild will begin on Wednesday 14th October at 7.15 pm in the Michael Sherry Facility, Main Street, Holytown. This session the Guild will be meeting every week. The programme for the first few weeks is:

Oct 14	Open Night
21	Harmony Entertains
28	Re-Dedication Service - Rev Caryl Kyle
Nov 4	Wood Turner

Do go along - you will be made most welcome.

RETIRAL

From the September issue of "Life and Work" we learn that our former interim minister, the Rev Iain M Goring has retired. Since leaving Holytown and Wrangholm Iain has been in Castlemilk, Balfron and Fintry and finally was in Edinburgh. We wish Iain and his wife, Janet, a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.

AN INTERVIEW WITH GOD - AUTHOR UNKNOWN

I dreamt I had an interview with God.

'So you would like to interview me?' God asked.

'If you have time' I said.

God smiled. 'My time is eternity . . . What question do you have in mind?'

'what surprises you most about humankind?'

God answered . . . 'That they get bored with childhood, that they rush to grow up, and then long to be children again. That they lose their health to make money - and then lose their money to restore their health. That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live in neither the present nor the future. That they live as if they would never die and die as though they had never lived.'

God's hand took mine, and we were silent for a while.

And then I asked 'As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?'

God replied, ' To learn they cannot make anyone love them. All they can do is allow themselves to be loved, to learn to forgive by practising forgiveness, to learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those they love, and it can take many years to heal them. To learn that a rich person is not the one who has the most, but is the one who needs the least. To learn that there are people who love them dearly, but simply do not yet know how to express or show their feelings.'

'to learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently. To learn that it is not enough that they forgive one another, but they must also forgive themselves'

'thank You for Your time' I said humbly. 'Is there anything

else you would like your children to know?'

God smiled and said . . . ' Just know that I am here . . . Always.'

TURNING THE CLOCK BACK

Recently in St Wolfgang in the Salzkammergut area of Austria I attended Morning Worship in the tiny Lutheran Church. On one of the Sundays we had Abendmahl (Communion). For Abendmahl every one has to go forward to the front of the church and stand in a semi-circle. We had two separate groups as there were only approximately twenty-four in the congregation. This was really a miniature united nations as the congregation was made up of people from Austria, Germany and the Netherlands. I was the sole representative of the United Kingdom.

The minister served the bread but not bread as we know it. Each person cupped their hands and the minister placed a wafer about the size of a 10p piece into it and at the same time said something like "God bless you" to each person. The children too went forward and were blessed. Being in the second group I noted that the final person to receive a wafer took the little dish from the minister and served him. The wine was served in like manner and again the last person served the minister.

At the conclusion of the service a table was placed outside and cold drinks were available. I had the opportunity of chatting to the three people who sat beside me. Their home is in Ulm, Germany. (I met them again in the village the next day and we again had a chat.)

The procedure in the Lutheran Church echoed the system in Holytown up to 1910. We had a table in the centre of the pews at which everyone sat to receive the bread and wine. Naturally there would have been insufficient space for everyone to sit at the table. They too would have come forward in groups until everyone had been served. A church still exists in the borders where this system continues.

The experience of sharing in a communion service emphasised to me that although minor differences do occur we are still able to appreciate and have pleasure in being in a mixed nationality and language group.

HOW GREAT THE YIELD FROM A FERTILE FIELD

The farmer plows through the fields of green,
And the blade of the plow is sharp and keen,
But the seed must be sown to bring forth grain,
For nothing is born without suffering and pain,
And God never plows in the soul of man
Without intention and purpose and plan . . .
So whenever you feel the plow's sharp blade
Let not your heart be sorely afraid,
For, like the farmer, God chooses a field
From which He expects an excellent yield . . .
So rejoice though your heart be broken in two -
God seeks to bring forth a rich harvest in you.

Helen Steiner Rice

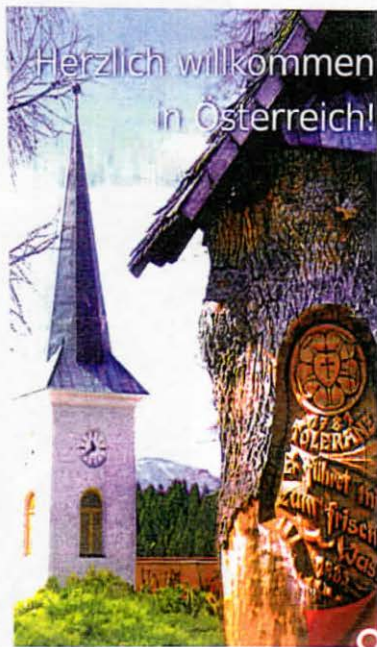
A DATE WITH A PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE

Twice over during this summer a date in the 18th century has cropped up - 1781. The first time was in May in Melk Abbey near Vienna and the second in a magazine issued by the Lutheran (or Protestant) Church in Austria. Why 1781? This date marks the beginning of tolerance for both the Protestants and the Muslims in Austria.

In Melk Abbey bold writing on the wall of one of the rooms describes the granting of tolerance. In Karnten a museum and a church from the 18th century commemorate this event.

What is really interesting is the fact that both churches showed in their separate ways the result of the declaration made by Kaiser Joseph II.

On the left is a picture of Melk Abbey and on the right a picture of Karnten.



This year the Lutheran Church is concentrating on education. The belief is that through education wider horizons become available to people. One of the fundamental concerns of the Reformation was that education should be available for everyone. Not only should the schools educate but also the museums. Even the kindergartens are expected to participate.. This is the message given by the Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Austria.

A PULPIT LIKE NO OTHER

In Traunkirchen, a village nestling beside a Lake, the Parish Church has a most unusual pulpit. Nowhere else to my knowledge has a pulpit shaped like a boat. The boat shows two fishermen and also replicas of fish on its side. Whether these fishermen are Peter and Andrew or James and John I do not know but whoever is represented gives us all a reminder that Jesus chose fishermen amongst his disciples.



THE CLOSING HYMN

On Sunday 30th August we closed with the singing of the hymn "Great is Thy faithfulness". The author was Thomas Obadiah Chisholm who was born in a log cabin in Franklin, Kentucky in 1866. He began to teach, without the benefit of high school or advanced training, in the same country school house where he had been educated. At 21 he became the associate editor of his home town weekly paper before moving on to become office editor of the "Pentecostal Herald". Later he was ordained to the Methodist ministry but had to resign due to poor health. In 1909 he became an insurance agent before retiring in 1953 at the age of 87. He died at the age of 94.

Mr Chisholm wrote more than 1,200 poems, many of which appeared in various religious periodicals.

In 1941 he wrote, "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness."

The hymn "Great is Thy faithfulness" was the favourite of a president of the Moody Bible Institute. It has since been an all-time favourite with students. As a result its use has spread to evangelical churches everywhere. Bev Shea states that this hymn was first introduced to audiences in Great Britain in 1954 by the Billy Graham Crusades and has since been a favourite there as well.

(Adapted from 101 Hymn Stories)

FAVOURITE HYMNS

It is interesting to learn which hymns are favourites with the congregation. If you were not present on the last Sunday of August you will be interested to know which hymns were chosen by Holytown and Wrangholm together. Here is the list:

To God be the glory
The King of love my shepherd is
One more step along the world I go
O what can little hands do
Just as I am, thine own to be
There is a green hill far away
O Jesus, I have promised
Lord, you have come to the seashore
The Lord's my shepherd (with chorus 'And I will trust in you alone')
The day you gave us, Lord, is ended
All my hope on God is founded
Will your anchor hold?
O Lord my God (How great Thou art)
Great is thy faithfulness

We must go back to the Revised Church Hymnary for one or two of these hymns, eg O what can little hands do and Just as I am, thine own to be.

The joint congregation clearly enjoyed singing these favourites and hearing the reasons why they had been chosen. Would you agree that this is something well worth repeating some time in the future?

A LITTLE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The word race is found in "Grace";
May "Grace" be in every "Race".

Be truthful in what you mean to say,
But, don't be mean in the way you say it!

Think a little,
Try a little,
Achieve more than a little.
