

holYROOD  abbey



THE GOSPEL AT WORK | AUTUMN 2009

VIEW



# CONTENTS

<b>Promoting the Gospel</b>	
Miners Wanted!	3
Church Marketing	5
Resources	6
Evangelism Conference	7
<b>Gospel Across Cultures</b>	
Bicentenary of the Scottish Bible Society	8
Five Months On...	9
Competition Gnomes	10
Summer Work in Hungary	11
Wee World Café	12
<b>Gospel in Us</b>	
The Lord Will Provide	13
A Hope and a Future	14
Wrestling with the Angel	15
Scrapbook	<b>Back Page</b>

**Baby & Toddlers** restarts 31st august  
mondays @ 10-11.30am, ages: pre-school

**1** restarts 1st sept  
tuesdays @ 6 - 7pm, ages: p1 - p3

**T** restarts 1st sept  
tuesdays @ 7.30 - 8.30pm, ages: p4 - p7

**T** restarts 1st sept  
tuesdays @ 7.30 - 8.30pm, ages: s1 - s3



## View Contacts

**Jo Allen**  
Editor



editor@holyroodabbey.org

**Marc Jones**  
Designer



design@holyroodabbey.org

**Beth Shinn**  
Administrator



admin@holyroodabbey.org

**Phil Hair**  
Minister



phil@holyroodabbey.org

Cover: Holyrood BBQ at  
Vogrie Country Park, June 09  
Photos by Namgyal Bhutia

Contributor photos by  
Bob Rankin

Holyrood Abbey Church  
83 London Road  
Edinburgh EH7 5TT

0131 661 6002  
www.holyroodabbey.org/view  
view@holyroodabbey.org



by Phil Hair

phil@holyroodabbey.org

**“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”**

Acts 1:8

## MINERS WANTED!

The story is told of the young minister who came to visit James Denney, the late 19th / early 20th century Scottish theologian who James Philip often described as ‘the prince of preachers’. This young minister was disheartened as he sought to promote mission amongst his congregation. His people just didn’t seem interested. ‘They don’t believe in mission’ he said with some anguish. James Denney replied, ‘Oh it’s not that they don’t believe in mission, it’s that they don’t believe in God!’

In Holyrood Abbey Church we believe in mission because our God is a mission hearted God. Jesus Himself spoke about this, saying to His disciples, ‘*As the Father has sent me, I am sending you*’ (Jn 20:21). I wonder how nervous, afraid even, the disciples were about this. They were going out into a world ripe for the gospel, but it was also hostile. It was a world very much like our own: multi-faith and anti-faith. As it was then, so it is now, with men and women suspicious of and antagonistic to a message which says that Jesus, as the Way, the Truth and the Life, is the only way to God. Communicating this message is not easy. How do we do it?

We’re going to be looking at this in our morning services throughout September and October. We will also have two ‘Evangelism Training Evenings’ on Wednesdays 9th and 23rd of September, led by Dave Rankin. On Saturday the 3rd of October we will be having a Day Conference on Evangelism led by Jason Curtis of Rutherford House. All of this is designed to encourage us in sharing our faith; at home, at work, in our leisure time; with neighbours, friends, or whoever it is we’re given the opportunity to speak to about Christ.

What was it that enabled these inarticulate disciples to go out into the world to spiritually ‘turn it upside down’? The answer is in the promise which Jesus made to them forty days later as He stood with them on the Mount of Olives; a promise as true today as it was then.

*‘But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8).*

Alfred Nobel, founder of the Nobel Prizes, was a chemist whose chief interest was the field of explosives. In 1866 he invented a safe and manageable form of high explosive, nitro-glycerine. This was an explosive power many times stronger than anything the world had known up to that time, but Alfred Nobel didn’t know what to call it.

Continued >>

He asked a Greek scholar what the Greek word for 'explosive power' was. His friend answered, 'dunamis'. 'That's what I'm going to call my discovery,' Alfred Nobel said, 'dynamite!' This is the same word that Jesus used in the promise which He gave His disciples, 'But you will receive dunamis: dynamite.' How can this power come to be ours? How can we see it doing its explosive work in the world? Luke tells us. *Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives.....They all joined together constantly in prayer.....' (Acts 1:12 & 14).*

Whether preaching from the pulpit or witnessing wherever we are, this is where power comes from. Evangelism and prayer cannot be separated. We can do many things in persuading, convincing, and moving people concerning the truth of the gospel, we will never be able to bring people who are spiritually dead to life. The power of the Holy Spirit is needed. *'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait..... in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 1:4 & 5).*

Professor O Hallesby expresses it best as he writes about revivals:

*"We long for revivals; we speak of revivals; we work for revivals; and we even pray a little for them. But we do not enter upon that labour in prayer which is the essential preparation for every revival.*

*"The work of the Spirit can be compared to mining. The Spirit's work is to blast to pieces the sinner's hardness of heart and his frivolous opposition to God. The period of the awakening can be likened to the time when the blasts are fired. The time between the awakenings corresponds on the other hand, to the time when the deep holes are being bored with great effort into the hard rock.*

*"To bore these holes is hard and difficult and a task which tries one's patience. To light the fuse and fire the shot is not only easy but is also very interesting work. One sees 'results' from such work. It creates interest, too: shots resound, and pieces fly in every direction!*

*"It takes trained workmen to do the boring. Anybody can light a fuse.*

*"The Spirit calls us to do the quiet, difficult, trying work of boring holy explosive material into the souls of the unconverted by daily and unceasing prayer. This is the real preparatory work for the next awakening. The reason why such a long period of time elapses between awakenings is simply that the Spirit cannot find believers who are willing to do the heavy part of the mining work."*

Whether it's with respect to revival in the nation or revival in the heart of the neighbour, colleague, friend, may God make us effective evangelistic miners.



by Marc Jones

**The main role of church marketing is to direct people to the message.**



## CHURCH MARKETING

*The thought of the word church and the word marketing in the same sentence makes me sick.*

Rob Bell, 'Velvet Elvis'

There is no shortage of people who would agree with these sentiments. Based on their definition of church marketing, I would include myself in their number. When a church becomes obsessed with flyer campaigns, glossy welcome packs, clever billboard adverts and award-winning websites it becomes a superficial mess.

But then that's not church marketing.

Now, don't get me wrong, (as a designer I don't want to commit career suicide here!) these elements have a role to play in how a church markets itself. However marketing, including church marketing, is so much more than this.

The best definition of marketing I've come across is 'the management of perception'. Every day we build up opinions and views on all sorts of products, people, groups, and events. These perceptions are guided by many factors, both internal (our own experiences and prejudices) and external (advertising, other people). Marketing is all about managing these perceptions in order that people see your 'product' the way you want them to. You don't need to look far to see Christianity misrepresented (try the comments section on a news website when the Church is in the news), so there is no shortage of prejudices to be challenged.

So far, so interesting, but what has this to do with a church seeking to spread the Gospel with honesty and integrity? Not a lot if 'managing' means 'manipulating', but the main role of church marketing is not to spin the message but to direct people to it.

So how do you manage people's perceptions? Well, brace yourself for some revolutionary thinking... you spend time with them. It's as simple as that! Or rather the *concept* is as simple as that. Putting it *into action* is far more difficult and requires time, effort and patience. But it is the single most effective way to show the Gospel in action and to 'market' the church.

On an individual level this means giving time to people, listening to them and understanding their needs. If people are indifferent, confused, suspicious, or hostile towards Christianity, we can either confirm those opinions or challenge them by our words and actions.

Effective marketing on a more corporate level means the church getting out into the community and seeing where the needs are. There's nothing groundbreaking here. Most of us are marketing the church in various ways already. But then church marketing is not a new concept. Paul spent most of his ministry doing it nearly 2,000 years ago!

## The Responsive Church

Nick Spencer and  
Graham Tomlin *VP*, 2005

Would hearing what your friends honestly thought about God or about Christians help you understand where they are coming from and how you might reach them with the gospel?

Drawing on research carried out by the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (LICC) the authors have sought to listen carefully to what people outside the church really think about God, Christianity, Christians and the church itself. The authors attempt what John Stott called "double listening": listening to our culture and listening to God.

The point is not to make the church market driven. The authors acknowledge that what people outside the church say about the church or God will sometimes need to be politely ignored. However, many of the comments identify "key issues for the church which are easier to see from the outside than the inside and which will help the church rediscover more of its calling and purpose."

## The Living Church

John Stott *VP*, 2007

Just a few reasons to read this remarkable book:-

- **Despite exploring complex issues, it is an easy read.**
- **The topic is really important.** The purpose of the book is to bring together a number of characteristics of an authentic or living church. You will not be surprised by any of the characteristics identified. The church needs to be learning, caring, worshipping and evangelizing. However, what Stott wants to see is more "radical conservative churches" – conservative in the sense that they conserve what the Bible plainly requires but radical "in relation to that combination of tradition and convention which we call culture".
- **It addresses issues of particular relevance to our denomination.** Dominic Smart reviewed "The Living Church" in the July edition of the Gilcomston South Record, and wrote that it is, "*astonishingly helpful for the times that we are going through in the Church of Scotland, and for the times that the Church faces in an increasingly liberal secular UK...*"
- **The chapter on evangelism is of particular relevance to us as a congregation.** The description of the church's double identity (a people called out of the world to worship God and sent back into the world to witness and serve) is extremely useful. That identity should shape how the church organises itself and how it expresses its message - which is the biggest challenge for us as a congregation.
- **It encourages us to see God's vision for His church.** The chapter on being salt and light is a remarkable reminder that the gospel has transforming power and that in God's hands and in God's power we can be, both as individuals and as a church, agents of radical change in this world.

## London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (LICC) – Connecting with Culture

[www.licc.org.uk/engaging-with-culture/connecting-with-culture/](http://www.licc.org.uk/engaging-with-culture/connecting-with-culture/)

Another weekly email service, "delivering a model of timely reflection, from a biblical perspective, on different aspects of contemporary culture, and inviting readers' responses."

LICC is committed to engaging with culture and understanding it through the lens of a biblical worldview. There are also downloadable podcasts and a variety of other resources on the website, which is well worth a look. I have found the Connecting with Culture e-mail incredibly helpful in the daily challenge to apply my Christian faith to the world around me.

## Evangelical Alliance - Friday Night Theology

[www.eauk.org/publictheology/friday-night-theology/](http://www.eauk.org/publictheology/friday-night-theology/)

Friday Night Theology is produced by the Evangelical Alliance and is a regular email comment on a news event of the week. It recognises that many of us spend our weekends talking about the events of the week with friends and family who aren't Christians. Friday Night Theology is a tool that you can use to enable Jesus to join in the conversation.

*I don't know how to say this  
I don't know where to stand  
I don't know where to put my feet  
or where to put my hands..  
I don't know how to say this...*

This is the opening verse of Conversations, the title track off an album by Sara Groves, an American singer-songwriter. The song describes how difficult it can sometimes be to speak to others about our faith.

There can be a whole range of reasons why we find it difficult. However, one the main reasons must surely be the prospect of having to answer difficult questions. This is why on Saturday, 3 October we are devoting a whole day to why it is we can be so confident about our faith and also how we can begin to tackle some of those difficult questions.

The aim of the day conference is to take those good intentions and to put them into action. Hopefully we will leave better equipped and better informed. The topics we will focus on are God and Science, Sexuality, Ethical Issues and the Exclusivity of Christ. However, more importantly, we want to be encouraged to see that the time is now and the place is here when it comes to sharing our faith.

Jason Curtis, Director of Rutherford House will be our main speaker and will introduce the day before we split into seminar groups to look in more detail at the chosen difficult issues. You will be able to attend 2 seminars in the course of the day with a final plenary session at the end of the day. It should be an immensely helpful day and I would encourage as many to attend as possible.

**EVANGELISM CONFERENCE SAT 3RD OCTOBER**



## BICENTENARY OF THE SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY

Since its founding on the 4th August 1809 the Scottish Bible Society (SBS) has been involved in the provision of the Scriptures in various formats throughout the world. Its aim is crystallised in its mission statement:

*to provide God's Word to all people  
in a language they can understand  
in a format they can use and  
at a price they can afford.*

Who can forget the thrill of providing the paper for Bibles to be actually printed in China, or the joy of the elderly in Romania who were able to read the Bible when they received the large print edition, or the excitement of Scottish children when they attend one of the Bibleworld experiences?

To celebrate the Bicentenary the SBS is working with the Brazilian Bible Society. In the north east 40% of the poorest Brazilians live in great poverty and squalor. They are without modern amenities and large families of 12 or more often live together in a one roomed shack. The Brazilian Bible Society believes that these remote villagers have the right to hear the good news of Jesus, to have the quality of their lives improved and to have access to medical treatment, just as much as city dwellers. The Society wants to reach these impoverished people by means of a bus whose interior will be converted to provide medical and dental treatment areas, as well as a Scripture area. Outside there will be a large awning where patients will learn about Jesus as they wait to be treated. SBS is hoping to provide the funding of £200,000 for this work.

To reach out to our own nation requires innovative and creative methods in today's society. SBS sponsored productions by Christian actors at the Edinburgh Fringe and produced a DVD of 'The Glasgow Gospel' – a retelling of the gospel stories in the Glasgow pater – which the Herald distributed. It is sponsoring the Methodist Collection of Christian Art at the Smith Art Gallery in Stirling in December.

Throughout these last two hundred years countless lives have been blessed and changed by hearing the Word of God in their own language or dialect. Men, women and children have been brought out of darkness into faith in Jesus. However, we cannot rest on what has been accomplished so far. The work continues as there are still 200 million people who do not have the Bible in their own language.



by Kathleen Forsyth

by David Ferguson



For more information on the work of the Scottish Bible Society, visit [scottishbiblesociety.org](http://scottishbiblesociety.org)



## FIVE MONTHS ON...

At our Re-commissioning Service in Holyrood, we shared an 'impossible' prayer request – a house to move into within two weeks of our arrival! Phil assured us during his message that God has provided for us. But a house within that timescale seemed to stretch the bounds of faith. Well, as many of you know the house was provided, even before we left the country! It's spacious, is opposite a large graveyard (so we won't disturb the neighbours!) and is just perfect for a church start.

However, things did not work just as we had hoped they would with our team. Pastor Yahiro has commitments in another church so will not be able to be on board until mid-2011, if indeed at all. Our hopes for another family to work with us were not realised. And the Chuas are only able to give limited (although very valuable) time to the church start due to extensive involvement in other ministries. But, as we were assured when we had a short service of dedication in our home in May, the Lord is with us and has gone before.

What's happened so far? On the face of it, not a lot! But so much in these early days is hidden. We are out and about getting to know people; we are building relationships; earning trust; being visible; waiting on the Lord; praying as we walk around; looking for these divine encounters. We have spent time working on the church vision. And we hope to distribute leaflets widely in the area with a view to simple services starting in mid-September; the beginning of Hiragishi Izumi Church. Izumi means 'spring', the word Jesus uses when speaking about living water to the woman at the well.



As Phil shared on our last Sunday, the Lord says to us 'I have many people in this city'. In Hiragishi alone there are over 50,000. Certainly very few are Christians. The need is great, the task is great, but a God who can provide a house just within two weeks will surely draw many of these people to himself.

# GOSPEL AND SU CAMPS From East to West

location: kinross, uk

For those of you who doubt it's possible to select anything as a prize and have 30 campers falling over themselves to win it I give you exhibit A: LM4C's 'Competition Gnomes'! These (badly) painted clay gnomes were offered up as reward for winning a week-long tournament in pool, table tennis or table football. Maybe it was the fact they had their own theme tunes (yes, there were a few!) or the sales patter of team leader Colin Carmichael, maybe the 11-13 years olds had an overdeveloped sense of irony. Whatever the reason, these three gnomes were the most sought after objects during the week.

Gnomes apart, the main highlight of the week was the contribution made by the four trainees. Although still in their teens, they showed a maturity that belied their youth. It was a huge encouragement to see them demonstrate a vibrant faith to the campers, as well as the positive response this received from the kids.



Marc Jones



"it's those  
competition,  
competition,  
competition  
gnomes!"

location: balatonoszod, hungary

Scripture Union, Hungary, has a staff of three; two full time and one part time. Erszebet Komlosi has been the National Co-ordinator since 2001 and is a pastor in the Hungarian Reformed Church. Her brother, Peter, currently studying in Edinburgh, often worships with us on a Sunday evening, and it was through him that we heard about the need for English speakers at some of the summer camps.

Every year SU organises camps for children. Some are specifically advertised as "English Speaking". For the past nine years Frontline teams have gone out from the UK to support teams at camps in Hungary, Slovakia and Rumania.

We were assigned to a small village, Balatonoszod, beside the shore of Lake Balaton, the nearest feature to a coast-line that Hungary possesses. It is a lovely area, very popular with holiday makers, and swimming in the lake was very relaxing at the end of a hectic day working with the children in temperatures in the mid thirties.

The SU team was there at the invitation of the pastor of the Reformed church, Zoltan Kariko, and his wife, Melinda. They have worked in the village for a few years and are looking for new ways to contact the younger people. They have just finished running their first Christianity Explored course. They need prayer for encouragement as new ideas are not easily accepted. Most of the children at the camp were from Roman Catholic backgrounds and not from Zoltan's own church.

We were responsible for an English lesson each day, memory verses in English and the majority of the daily Bible talk. The theme was "God's Big Plan", ie Genesis to Revelation - quite a challenge when everything had to be translated into Hungarian! We developed hidden talents for miming! SU Hungary works with limited material resources; more than compensated for by the dedication and ability of the young Hungarian team members. It was good to be challenged to use our imaginations when there was no Powerpoint, overhead projector, flip chart or even blackboard. Maybe belonging to an older generation worked as a positive advantage!

We experienced good relationships with both children and team members and felt that a positive work was done during the week. A large number of parents came to the Parents' Afternoon where we had the opportunity to present a short gospel message based on what the children had learned through the week. Our own trust in God was deepened as we looked to Him for help with new challenges and we want to thank all who prayed for us and for the camp. Our Heavenly Father heard and answered abundantly.



Robert Nelson



Alison Nelson



## WEE WORLD CAFÉ

*'And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.'*

Deuteronomy 10:19

When I returned in 2008 from a year living in Benin, West Africa, I felt that one of the most significant insights which God had given me was how difficult it can be to live as a foreigner in a strange land. I came back to Edinburgh with a desire to use my experiences to show love towards those who are foreigners in our land, as God has called us to do. We have so many opportunities to answer this call, especially when it comes to international students. It is estimated that there are over one million international students in the UK, with the number on the increase.

One well known evangelical Christian mission agency in the UK is Friends International, which seeks to help international students, and equip churches to reach students for Christ. When I heard about the work of Friends International I became very keen to get involved. Their vision is for every international student in the UK to have a Christian friend and through that, a chance to hear the gospel message. This is a wonderful vision and I love making new friends!

Friends International provides the opportunity for students to make friends, practice their English and meet local people through International Cafés. In September last year I joined the Wee World Café team. The WWC is held every Monday during the University term in the centre of Edinburgh and is run by a team of Christians from different churches across the city. Each week we have time to chat with folk, and usually we'll have a game or special activity. We normally have between 15 and 25 students coming along, from many different parts of the world. There are a lot of regulars who come, and some great friendships have been sparked after meeting at café.

Every week there is an opportunity for the students to join in a Bible discussion on a particular subject or passage. It is such a privilege to discuss and share our faith with those who choose to come along, some of whom have never read the Bible before. I love being part of the WWC team and am so happy that God has led me to this area of ministry. Please pray that God would open doors for me, and for all those who seek to reach out to international students!



by: **Jo McNeill**

by: **Alex Aitken**

For more information on the work of Friends International, visit [friendsinternational.org.uk](http://friendsinternational.org.uk)

**Conscious of my sin and rebellion, and need for Christ's forgiveness, I prayed the only sincere prayer I could: "Come into my heart Lord Jesus".**

## THE LORD WILL PROVIDE

My early years were years of rebellion against the gracious witness of my godly parents. I had one aim: to join the Merchant Navy, an aim which my father finally, reluctantly, gave in to. I set out on my training, unaware that my father had written to every Christian friend he could to ask them to pray for my conversion before I went to sea. God answered those prayers. One month before going to sea I was converted after a sermon by the then minister of Palmerston Place Church in Edinburgh. In the upper-hall of that church for the first time I prayed. Conscious of my sin and rebellion, and need for Christ's forgiveness, I prayed the only sincere prayer I could: "Come into my heart Lord Jesus". He came and He has never gone away! Weeks later I joined my first ship, a young lad of seventeen from a Christian home, pitched into a godless drunken environment where nothing but the love and grace of God kept and protected me.

In my sea going years I sought, not always successfully, to maintain a Christian witness. I rarely spoke of my faith, but there must have been something of that faith evident, for one of the officers said to me, "Alex, you should be in the ministry." It took many months of thought, prayer, and correspondence with my father, before we were both sure, through further clear signs, that I should leave the sea and commence preparation for the ministry. Before that, however, there were two years of national service to do in the army; further years of testing where God undertook in preserving my faith and witness. I was greatly helped through the ministry of the Mission to Military Garrisons. There followed years of hard study enlightened by fellowship and teaching within the IVF Christian Union at Edinburgh University, to which I owe an immense debt. Two years after New College I was called to Rochiulla Church in Possilpark in Glasgow and ordained to the ministry.

After ten years of service there, years which included the great joy of my marriage to Catherine and the beginning of our family, I was called to Newhaven, where I was to minister for the next twenty-two years. On the day I took leave of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, I gave testimony to the way God had never failed me, especially with regard to the Sunday ministry; even to children's talks given at the last moment, fulfilling what the Rev Eric Alexander once described as the "inspiration of desperation". His faithfulness remains with me to this very day. I need to say with Abraham of old, Jehovah Jireh—"The Lord will provide". This he has done on every occasion and in every circumstance, and to His Name be all glory.

## A HOPE AND A FUTURE

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “Plans to give you hope and a future.”*

Jeremiah 29:11

I was brought up in an amazing Christian family where my parents taught me faithfully of the good news of the Gospel. We moved to Aleson in 1990, where Dad took up his first charge in the Church of Scotland. Life as a ‘minister’s kid’ was interesting! Everyone had expectations of me and was quick to let my parents know if I fell short of these. I went to church and believed in God therefore believed I was a Christian, but I didn’t have an understanding of what it really meant. During my first SU Camp, I decided that I was ready to make a real commitment to following Jesus.

As I prepared to go to Edinburgh to study Speech and Language Therapy, my exam results came through the post. I had failed everything! I was distraught. A long time later and after many phone calls, I was offered a place at Northern College, Aberdeen to study Primary Teaching. During this time I received a card from a family friend with Jeremiah 29:11 on it. I have never forgotten it. Since I was a tearful teenager worrying about my future, it has been close to my heart and brought comfort to me. It is one of God’s many amazing promises to those who love Him.

I now understand that God wanted me to take this different step for several reasons. I gained so much confidence in Aberdeen. Not knowing anyone forced me to go out and meet people. If I had come to Edinburgh straight away, I would have relied on my brother and sister and not felt able to be as independent. I also know now that primary teaching really is my dream job – I cannot see myself doing anything else!

The reality of what God has done for me, what it means to trust and follow Him and live my life to His glory became clear over that time; changing my perspective on life. I live each day with the assurance that the sovereign God is with me and goes before me. I have a relationship with God, who is my best friend. I can talk to Him anywhere and He will listen. I try to live my life following the example of Jesus that He gives in His word, the Bible. It’s not always easy! I have given my life to Jesus but I continue to learn and grow every day.



by Aileen  
Malaczynska



by: Roderick Shippin

**Then the man said,  
“Your name will no  
longer be Jacob, but  
Israel, because you  
have struggled with  
God and with men and  
have overcome.”**

Genesis 32:27



## WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL

Having recently graduated from St Andrews University, I can start to look back on my time there with some sort of focus! Most of my four years there were spent in a blur of activity...waking up, eating, having the occasional nap, waking up again, fitting in the odd lecture or trip to the library, struggling with study and eventually managing to escape with a degree.

Going to university brings a lot of independence. Fending for yourself means that you are suddenly less restricted in what you can do. There’s no one to stop you staying up till 5 in the morning before an exam, to take a purely hypothetical example! You are responsible for organising and motivating yourself, as my painful struggles with early morning (and afternoon) lectures can testify.

There is also an increased mental independence. You have to work out for yourself what you believe in the context of an education which encourages critical thinking. In addition, meeting people with different beliefs and assumptions about life is often a challenge. This is especially true concerning spiritual matters. For me a tension sometimes existed between trying to defend my faith and realising that I was unsure of the foundations of that faith as I grappled with the issues that were raised. Was my faith based on anything more than upbringing and habit?

Over the course of my time at university, having to face these issues has resulted in the strengthening of my faith. I have been blessed with a number of supportive Christian friends. I have also been encouraged by some excellent teaching and preaching, particularly at the St Andrews Free Church, which built on the ministry that I have been privileged to receive from Phil, Murdo, Emma and others at Holyrood.

What I have most found myself clinging to, however, is the gospel at work in my own life as well as that of others. I have seen the difference that this can make in the lives of my Christian friends, and to those who have put their faith in Christ while I’ve known them.

Ultimately, it is important to face these issues boldly instead of skirting around them. It was through actively wrestling with the Angel that Jacob found his assurance and blessing. We should show equal boldness in the knowledge of a God who promises that if we ask, we shall receive.



Given the red faces, it's safe to say this pic was taken after the meal!  
Men's Curry Night - 30th May

congratulations to:



Jo, Aaron and baby Jack Allen  
(pictured)  
Jack's Baptism - 5th July

Christopher, Jackie and baby Julian Bechtel  
Julian's Baptism - 19th April



Sumin and Sunmin Yoon  
with Joy, Anna, John and Simon Archer  
The Yoons headed to Vietnam at the end of June



Roderick Shippin  
MA (Hons) in English - 23rd June



Cath Robertson  
celebrated her 90th birthday on 1st June

Got any photos for  
the next issue?  
We'd love to see them!

Email your pics to  
[view@holyroodabbey.org](mailto:view@holyroodabbey.org)