

St. John's Parish Church, Kirkcaldy

"Echoes" August 2006

Dear Friends,

Summer is traditionally a quieter time in the life of most churches, with many folks away on holiday and organisations taking a well-earned break from their usual activities. This year, though, there was a hive of activity behind the scenes as we got ready for Seaside Rock Holiday Club. It has been a real team effort with people involved in a myriad of ways from preparing craft activities to organising refreshments, to decorating the large hall, planning games and much, much more.

In addition to some 20 volunteers, we have also been joined by Heather Scott, our enthusiastic new children's worker with a focus in music, drama and games. I am delighted to have Heather on board and hope that you will take time to introduce yourself to her if you have not already done so. Read more about Heather in her own article in this edition of the Echoes.

Like Heather, I am in the process of putting lots of names and faces together too in my new role as the chaplain assigned to the 205 (Scottish) Field Hospital (V) unit at Granton Square in Edinburgh. Officially, my role is to provide spiritual, moral and pastoral support. In practice, that means getting alongside people, so I will be learning a variety of new skills from map reading to operating a radio and using the phonetic alphabet.

I am well used to the language of the church, but understanding the jargon of the military is a bit like learning a foreign language. It has been a good reminder to me of how easy it is to take for granted that newcomers to St. John's will understand what we mean when we talk about the chancel, the new hall or the small hall.

As Christians, we become familiar with the language of the church whether local, denominational or theological. We use or hear words like kirk session, Presbytery, sacrament or resurrection but they certainly are not in common use outside church circles. After we leave church on a Sunday morning, we face the task of living out our faith and yes, even sharing our faith, in language that is comprehensible to those in our midst.

Wherever and however you find yourself sharing the Good News, may God bless you.

Grace and peace,

Nicola

Mark your calendar for these special services!

Autumn is the season for many special services amongst which are the following:

15th October	Holy Communion
22nd October	Harvest Thanksgiving
29th October	Celebration Sunday
5th November	Founder's Day
12th November	Remembrance Sunday

Taekwondo Club

With temperatures into the 70s, five members and friends of St. John's Taekwondo Club completed the 26.2 mile Hairy Haggis Run in June's Edinburgh Marathon in 4hrs 12 min, In the run up to the marathon, one of our teams. was also dropping pounds and raising money for club funds in the process, Thanks to the generosity of folks in and beyond the church, the club is well on the way to covering the cost of bringing of Senior Master Kohl from the World Traditional Taekwondo Union Headquarters in Little Rock, Arkansas to Kirkcaldy in March next year. We look forward to welcoming Mr. Hughes, another WTTU instructor and master in Philippino stick fighting, who will visit us whilst on holiday in Scotland in September.

Our Tiny Tigers class for 5 and 6 year olds was off to a good start last term with an average of eight students taking part each week. This class runs with a maximum of 12 students and 2 instructors, Classes resume on Thursday 24 August for Tiny Tigers and Sunday 27 August for Sparring and weapons.

Tiny Tigers (ages 5 and 6)	Thursdays	5.00-5.30 p.m.
Regular class (age 7 to adult)	Fridays	7.30-8.15 p.m. 8.15-9.00 p.m.
Advanced class (blue belt and above)		9.00-9.30 p.m.
Sparring and weapons	Sundays	6.30-7.30 p.m.

Thanksgiving Service for Pets

We were blessed with, a lovely bright sunny summer afternoon for our first outdoor thanksgiving service for animals. Well over forty people together with fourteen remarkably well behaved dogs gathered for the short service and then stayed for strawberry sundaes, strawberry tarts and scones afterwards courtesy of the social/fundraising team. The collection in aid of the Scottish SPCA raised £221.34.

Holiday Club

At the time of writing, final preparations for Seaside Rock are underway with over 20 volunteers involved in the holiday club. The service on Sunday 20th August will be an all age service when we hope to hear from some of the children who came along to Seaside Rock.

Sunday School

Sunday school starts a little earlier than usual this year with the opening session on 27th August, following on from Seaside Rock holiday club and all-age service, Our regular team of Sunday school teachers will be joined by our new children's worker Heather Scott who will be leading youngsters in music, games and drama.

Kirk Session Conference

As a follow up to Presbytery's quinquennial visit last year, we are holding a kirk session conference on Wednesday 30th August at 7.15 p.m. in the church. Our speaker will be the Rev, Martin Fair, minister of St. Andrew's Church in Arbroath. Martin will be sharing with us some of the developments in worship and leadership at St. Andrew's. Any member of the church interested in coming along would be most welcome.

Tribute to David Pane

Members of St. John's were saddened on 26th July to hear of the death of David Page. Davie, as he was most widely known, was our Senior Elder having joined St. John's Kirk Session in June, 1955. On 1 June this year he celebrated his 90 birthday, was still driving around and active both in and outwith church circles. Davie's late wife, Peggy, for those of you who did not know, made and presented the church with the "Last Supper" tapestry which hangs above the book of remembrance in the church. His "wee" sister, Ina Michie, is also a "weel kent" face in St. John's.

During his years of service to St. John's Davie was very active on the social scene, fabric and possibly best known for his ever present attendance in the back row of the choir. Rev. Nicola Frail led us in celebrating the life of Davie in St. John's and at the crematorium funeral services on Thursday, 3rd August. Our thoughts and prayers are with Sybil, his daughter and her family, and his sister Ina at this time. Thanks be to God for our good and faithful servant and friend of St. John's, David Page.

Bill Stenhouse, Session Clerk



Hi there, my name is Heather Scott and I'm going to be the new music and drama worker at St. John's Church. I'm 19 years old, engaged and we have a 16 month old boy, who I love to bits!

I used to work in Spain doing a cheeky girls' tribute act with my identical twin sister, I also worked down in Devon in a holiday park as a children's entertainer, so I love everything to do with music and drama. I am hoping to bring some fun and energy to the church and get more people to see how much fun it is to learn drama, never know we might have a few born actors in the church!

S.O.S.

We are helping people on the other side of the world if we 'Save our Stamps'. Imagine being abandoned by your family. This is what sometimes happens in Bangladesh. When people are too old to work, they are cast out by other members of the family and left to fend for themselves.

The Church of Bangladesh Social Development Programmes (C.B.S.D.P.) runs the 'Golden Jubilee Project' which provides somewhere for these old people to meet, eat and receive medical care. Where we come in, is when we cut off our used stamps from letters etc. we receive and bring them to the church. By doing this, we help finance the G.J.P. and therefore help these poor people. Keep up the good work.

Reading Group — Sandra Marshall

The Reading Group this session has met and thoroughly enjoyed 'Women of the Old Testament'. We have explored the story of Eve, the troubles of Sarah and Hagar, and been amazed at the loyalty, courage and faith of Miriam, Rahab, Ruth and Naomi.

The stories of Abigail and Esther also demonstrate how, by showing wisdom and courage these women could turn round difficult situations to help save their friends and community.

We have learned how God uses the unlikely person (Rahab) and the refugee (Ruth) for His purposes — both became forebearers of Jesus. God challenges us today to recognise that He can speak through anyone and everyone, no matter their race, colour or creed.

God.com

Every single evening as I'm lying here in bed,
This tiny, little Prayer, keeps running through my head:
God bless all my family, wherever they may be,
Keep them warm and safe from harm, for they're so close to me.
And God there is one more thing, I wish that you could do;
Hope you don't mind me asking, please bless my computer too
Now I know that it's unusual, to Bless a motherboard,
But listen just a second, while I explain it to you, Lord.
You see, that little metal box, holds more than odds and ends;
Inside those small compartments, rest so many of my friends;
I know so much about them, by the kindness that they give,
And this little scrap of metal, takes me in to where they live.
By faith is how I know them, much the same as you
We share in what life brings us, and from that our friendships grew.
Please take an extra minute, from your duties up above,
To bless those in my address book, that's filled with so much love.
Wherever else this prayer may reach, to each and every friend,
Bless each e-mail inbox, and each person who hits 'send'.
When you update your heavenly list, on your own Great CD-ROM
Bless everyone who says this prayer, sent up to GOD.com.

AMEN

Contributed by Helen Lundie

European Women — Mary Sherrard

Two Fife women have recently been appointed to represent Scotland on the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women — Beryl Cowling of Gateside, Cupar, who is a Methodist, and Connie Robertson of Glenrothes, who is a Guild member of the Church of Scotland. They travel to Switzerland this month to take up their duties.

The Forum was set up around 1984 as a support and encouragement to Christian women in Eastern Europe — communist Europe — and to enable women to come together to pray and work together for a lasting peace. Over 30 countries are in membership and every Christian denomination is represented. Worship and Bible study at Forum events are memorable. Meeting women from countries which were behind the Iron Curtain is sobering — and delightful.

The issue now being tackled is Human Trafficking, which has been described as a form of modern day slavery. Countless women from the Baltic and Eastern European countries were brought to Germany during the World Cup for the brothels which had been set up. Scotland too is one of the receiving countries. The Guild reported to the recent General Assembly on this issue. There was disappointment that the Assembly did not submit a petition to the Scottish Parliament.

Remember in your prayers the work of Beryl and Connie and their colleagues throughout Europe. And remember too the victims of human trafficking.

THE CHOIR

When we finished our weekly practices at the end of April, we thought we deserved a well-earned rest. However, that was not to be, and we decided to meet on a Sunday at 10.30a.m. so that we could continue to sing some new items of praise in our worship. Attendances at these practices have been excellent, considering that it is not always possible, for various reasons, for all choir members to be there for half past ten.

Regular Thursday evening practices commence on 7th September from 7.15p.m. to 8.30p.m. in the New Hall. As always, new members will be made most welcome.

We were saddened by the death of Davie Page on 26 July. Davie was a much appreciated member of the choir for so many years, and a most regular attender at the weekly practices and Sunday worship. He cheered us up on many a Thursday evening with his wealth of experience over such a long period of time. On a Sunday morning, when Nicola comes to the New Hall before the service to pray with the choir, there is usually a lot of talking going on, but Davie was always there to bring the choir to order. In his loud voice, he used to say, “Stand by your beds”, and the room was reduced to silence. We will miss his presence amongst us, but we are grateful for his many years of devoted service to the choir and the church. On a personal note, over the 20 years that I have been at St. John’s, Davie has supported me 100% in all my duties as organist and treasurer.

Brian Booth, Organist

St. John's Boys' Brigade

St. John's Boys' Brigade 2006-2007 season opens on the first week in September.

Anchor Boys ages 5 - 8 years old on Friday, 1st September, 6.15p.m. – 7.15p.m.

Junior Section ages 8 - 11 years old on Thursday, 7th September, 6.15p.m. - 7.30p.m.

Company and Senior Sections ages 12 - 18 years on Thursday, 7th September, 7.30 – 9.30p.m.

We have a programme to suit each group of boys which has proved very successful and we will welcome any boy who wishes to join.

John Methven (Captain)

Get Together — Effie Cooper

We're still here with the same offers. Two hours of enjoyment every Thursday from 2 till 4, a drive in the summer and a party at Christmas. Any takers?

But for how much longer! Is there anyone out there who can help us carry on? We need younger folk as helpers. Have you recently retired? The kids made you redundant? At a loose end?

They say laughter is the best medicine, then come along and taste ours. You are needed.

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

In the Easter edition of "Echoes" I provided details of our Budget for 2006, which showed an estimated deficit of £6,229 for the year to 31st December, 2006. At a meeting of the Finance Team on 5th April I agreed to produce a summary of our financial position in the Announcements in the Order of Service on a quarterly basis and also in "Echoes" at the start of the winter session. For various reasons, it has been impossible for me to establish a suitable cut-off point to provide a meaningful statement. There are quite a number on items of expenditure under question at the moment e.g. utilities and travel, and income has not been received from several organisations using our premises on a regular basis. To report at the moment would not provide reasonably accurate details. Once I have clarified these items I will be in a better position to report to you on our current financial position. Expenditure and Income are more or less as per our budget, and I would expect the estimated deficit to be less than that originally forecast.

The cost of heating and lighting our church and halls has greatly increased. The best deal for us is through the Church of Scotland General Trustees Utility Arrangements where we have entered into fixed term contracts with Npower for the supply of gas and Scottish Gas Business for the supply of electricity. However, the cost of gas has increased by 110%, and the cost of electricity has increased by 61%. These increased costs have been accounted for in our Budget for 2006, but it is still very, very important that we economise as much as possible to reduce the cost of heating and lighting our premises. On my visits to the church and halls I observe many instances where we are not economising and we are wasting money on unnecessary heating and lighting. Where

possible, please economise and help to reduce these costs, which are estimated to amount to £5,100 for this year. Your support would be greatly appreciated by myself, the Finance Team and the Congregational Board.

At the last meeting of the Finance Team it was also agreed that the Annual Gift weekend would be Saturday and Sunday 28th and 29th October. All members will receive further details of this opportunity to respond to God's grace and love.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and co operation.

Brian Booth, Treasurer

Women's Group

The 2006/2007 session of the Women's Group begins on Tuesday 5th September when we are having a guided walk along Seafield, from the car park to Seafield Tower. The Group meet every second Tuesday evening in the New Hall at 7.30p.m. We have a variety of subjects and speakers lined up for our new session including talks on counselling services and the Fife coastal path, a visit to the Museum and a demonstration of line dancing. Our Easter Bunny Drive next year is on April 10th.

Our numbers are small (approx. 12 ladies) but we enjoy the varied subjects, the friendship and fellowship our group provides. New members very welcome. Contact Irene Wood, (Tel.267995) for further information.

Where is Love found?

Where is love found?

In a bright sunny smile,

In the laugh of a neighbour who visits awhile,

In two hands that are clasping in prayer

Love is there.

Where is love found?

In a child's trusting eyes,

In the kisses that come with hellos and goodbyes,

In a home, warm with patience and care

Love is there.

Where is love found?

In the way that we live,

In the friendships we cherish,

The help that we give,
In each heart that is willing to share, Love is there.

A Poem by Catherine Drummond

Mens' Bowling Group — Jim Christie

We have had a very good season at Gallatown Bowling Green. The weather has even been kind to us, having only lost two nights due to rain. Our challenge game with Leven Parish was played in excellent weather and friendly rivalry. (We lost.) We now play a match against Gallatown Park Bowling Club for the Bill Blake trophy. Wish us luck or better still come and join us.

Fabric Report

With the completion of the internal decoration to the corridor areas of the halls earlier this year, our attention has been focused on the exterior of the Church and halls. Instepp, the youth skills training programme, had undertaken to re decorate the exterior work but due to budget cuts, funding for this programme was withdrawn in April this year and Instepp was disbanded. This was a tragedy for the trainees concerned as this programme was one of the very few avenues available for youngsters to gain work experience.

Unfortunately, for St. John's, work had already commenced on the exterior with the timber windows to the halls and the metal railings being abandoned in various stages of preparation. However, it is hoped that the bulk of the exterior re-decoration work will be completed this year by voluntary labour. As outlined earlier this year, further attention will be required to the exterior fabric of the Church and halls, which together with such items as boiler replacement and entrance ramps will keep the Fabric Committee and Congregational Board busy.

As ever, I would ask anyone with practical skills and/or able to lend a helping hand to the work of the Fabric Committee to get in touch with myself, or any other member of the Fabric Committee. All offers are gratefully accepted!

Thanking you all for your support.

Roddie Sellars, Fabric Convener

PRAYER GROUP

Did you know? Our church now has two prayer boxes? One in the vestibule and the other in the prayer room. These have been put there for your use. Beside the boxes are small slips of paper for prayer requests. When you see the boxes, lift them and read the message printed there. Do you have a loved one or friend or neighbour whom you feel could perhaps be comforted knowing they are being prayed for? If there is a request or requests then be assured that person or persons will be sincerely prayed for. Don't ever imagine that anything is too small to pray about. If it concerns you it concerns God. Prayer is like breathing. It is essential to life and we are closest to God in prayer. So, use

the slips of paper and the boxes. If you are in doubt how to word your request, please speak to any member of the group. Our meetings are informal. We would be glad to have you join us.

At present we are a small band of six people meeting on the third Wednesday of every month in the Prayer Room from 10a.m. until 11a.m. We try to keep ourselves informed of happenings in the life of St. John's Church and of issues in the wider church and also in the community. We remember in prayer those who are sick, are anxious, are sad. We give thanks for God's blessings.

Arranging a bowl of flowers in the morning can give a sense of quiet in a crowded day — like writing a poem or saying a prayer.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

TO ALL THE KIDS WHO WERE BORN IN THE 1930s 40s, 50s.

First we were born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they carried us. They took aspirin ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can and didn't get tested for diabetes Our baby cribs were covered with bright coloured lead based paints. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and, when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets, not to mention the risks we took hitch-hiking.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pick up on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle. We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and no one actually died from this. We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank soda pop with sugar in it, but we weren't overweight because WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING! We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day and we were OK. We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scrap and then ride down the hill only to find out we forgot the brakes.

After running into bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem. We did not have play stations, Nintendos, Xboxes, no video games at all, no 99 channels on cable, no video tape movies, no cell phones, no personal computers, no internet or internet chat rooms — WE HAD FRIENDS and we went outside and found them. We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt. We were given BB guns for our 10th birthdays, made up games with sticks and tennis balls and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out many eyes. We rode bikes or walked to a friends house and knocked on the door or rang the bell or just yelled for them. Little League had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to 'get over it'.

The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of, they actually sided with the law. This generation has produced some of the best risk takers, problem solvers and inventors ever. The past 50 years have seen an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility and we learned HOW TO

DEAL WITH IT ALL!

Are YOU one of them? CONGRATULATIONS!

Contributed by Helen Lundie

Our language has wisely sensed the two sides of being alone. It has created the word “loneliness” to express the pain of being alone. And it has created the word ‘solitude’ to express the glory of being alone.

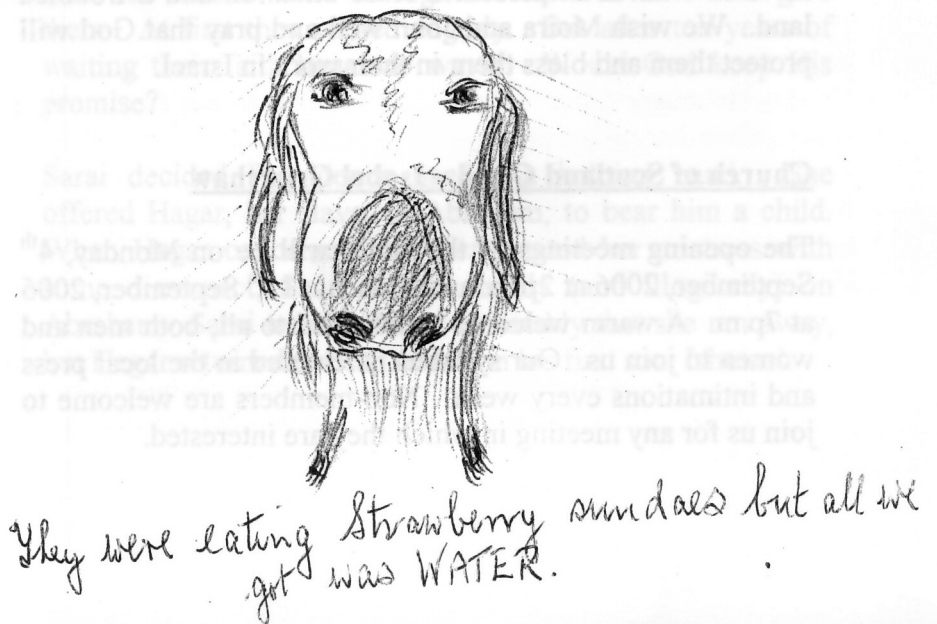
Paul Tillich

TILE SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING TEAM

The social and fundraising Team have been busy raising funds for the Church. In the spring we had a very successful concert by the Kevock Choir. This was an excellent evening and was very well attended. The amount raised was £1,270.

During June, July and August we have been holding our Strawberry Teas on a Friday afternoon finishing with the Strawberry Fayre on Saturday, 19th August. Again these have been well attended and the weather was fantastic with everyone enjoying being outside in the church grounds. Thanks go to Ruby, Jean, Angela, Isobel, Mary, Grace and Senga for providing all the home baking, strawberries, cream etc. Our menu has been varied with strawberry scones, tarts, pavlova, flan and even ice cream sundaes. A great time was had by all and it was nice to see everyone very summery and having an enjoyable afternoon.

Thanks to everyone who supported us.



Update on Tabeetha School, Jaffa - Mary Sherrard

We all pray that the sad and frightening situation in the Middle East will be resolved soon. Inevitably our Church of Scotland personnel in Israel are caught up in the tensions and hostilities. Tabeetha School in Jaffa — the only Church of Scotland school — continues to serve Christian, Muslim and Jewish children, but has been left without a Head-teacher. Moira Cubic has agreed to fill this position for one year and she will be accompanied by her husband, Rev. John Cubie.

Many of us in St. John's have met Moira and John when they visited our Guild in March of this year and their enthusiasm for Tabeetha is infectious. Moira served for a term in Tabeetha a few years ago just after her husband retired from his charge in Paisley. They now live in St. Andrews, and will fly out to Israel this month (August).

We will follow Moira's year with interest, applauding the decision of both Moira and John to forsake retirement and serve in what is at present a tense situation and a troubled land. We wish Moira and John well and pray that God will protect them and bless them in their work in Israel.

Church of Scotland Guild — Isobel Grimshaw

The opening meetings of the Guild will be on Monday, 4th September, 2006 at 2p.m. and Monday, 11th September, 2006 at 7p.m. A warm welcome is extended to all, both men and women to join us. Our syllabus is featured in the local press and intimations every week, Non-members are welcome to join us for any meeting in which they are interested.

WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT- Mary Sherrard

No.2 Sarah Waiting for God to act.

From Genesis chapters 11-23

Sarah (or Sarai as she was originally named) was the wife of Abram (Abraham); they lived in the period spanning 2000BC. In Jewish tradition Sarai is said to be the same person as Iscah, daughter of Abraham's youngest brother Haran, Sarai was a beautiful woman. She captured the hearts of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and later of Abimelech, king of the Philistines, Indeed both kings carried her off to live with them since Abraham pretended Sarai was his sister. Both times, when the truth emerged, she was returned to Abraham.

Sarai was a woman of quick emotions, capable both of generosity and spitefulness. She was childless. God had made a promise to Sarai and Abraham. He said he would bless the whole world through the children he would give them. At first they waited eagerly. But after ten years of waiting their faith began to waver. Would God keep His promise?

Sarai decided Providence needed a helping hand. She offered Hagar, her slave, to Abraham, to bear him a child. When Hagar conceived and then treated her mistress with some disrespect, Sarai turned angrily (and illogically) on Abraham. Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she ran away, but Hagar returned to bear Abraham his first son, Ishmael.

Thirteen years later, God reminded Abraham of His promise of a child to him and to Sarai. Sarai's name was changed to Sarah. (Sarai means 'my princess', i.e. Abraham's princess; Sarah means 'princess' — now she would produce descendants through whom she would be acknowledged as princess by many nations.) Sarah learned that she would conceive while she was listening to a conversation between Abraham and three angels. She laughed in disbelief, though she later tried to deny it.

Disbelief turned to joy when Isaac was born. Sarah continued to see Ishmael as a threat and she made Abraham banish Ishmael and Hagar to the desert.

Sarah is reported to have died at the age of 127. She was buried in the cave of Machpelah at Hebron in the land of Canaan.

No.3 Ragar Mother of Ishmael

From Genesis chapters 16 and 21

Hagar was an African slave under the control of Sarah, a Hebrew woman. She had no control over her body, it belonged to her slave owner. She became a single parent, forced into surrogate motherhood. She and her child Ishmael were eventually cast out with only some food and water, and became exiles with no home. When Hagar encountered God, He did not give her liberation but provided ways and means of survival — God gave her a new vision and she saw a well of water where she had not seen one before. Hagar was able to choose a wife for Ishmael in order to perpetuate her own cultural heritage and not that of her slave owners.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES?...

Indian tribe sends a missionary to tackle spiritual void in Wales

Indian tribes who were converted to Christianity by missionaries in Wales are now returning to evangelise the Welsh because they believe that the country is in a state of religious decline. The diocese of Mizoram, in the north-east of India, has already sent one missionary to south Wales and is planning to send a second to help the Welsh Presbyterian Church with its shortage of ministers. *Iona News*

Mass on air, In the air

Church services broadcast to housebound parishioners in Ireland have been interrupting transatlantic flights. The masses, broadcast by the Roman Catholic churches in counties Kildare, Meath, and Kilkenny, have been cutting across the airwaves, Pilots who were passing over Ireland had no idea what the interference was, but an investigation tracked it to the morning mass broadcast on a local frequency. The Irish Aviation Authority said, "The pilots have not reported hearing hymns or prayers, but it was the regularity of the interference that prompted experts to look at the church angle. It seemed to happen at the same time each morning. ComReg, the communications regulator in Ireland said that it was not in any way his intention to stop the broadcast of these "very important services." He was looking into "which frequency is being used, so we can find a way of transmitting the services without interference."

“This is your captain speaking. I’d like to reassure you that if you hear anyone praying, it’s not me,”

Church Times