

Pollokshields Church of Scotland Glasgow

VISION

Minister: The Rev. David Black 423 4000
Session Clerk: Mrs. Mary Morrison 632 1659

June 2009



The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer
God's Heart in a garden
Than anywhere
else on earth."

Dorothy Gurney

In this issue:	page		page
General Assembly I & II	2	Letter from Zambia	12
Logos Hope	4	Gardens	14
120th BB	5	Showstoppers	15
New Victoria Hospital	7	Goshen	17
Amos	8	Ants	18
Women's 10K	9	Local Charity Shop	18
Jacob's Kids	10	Points for Prayer	19
Memory Lane	11	Praise Gathering	20

Services and Pastoral Arrangements for Summer 2009.

7th June 11am Morning Worship, Crèche and Junior Church.

14 June 11am Holy Communion

21st June 11am Morning Worship, Crèche and Junior Church.

28th June 11am Morning Worship, Crèche and Junior Church.

Throughout July and August there will be a single morning service and Junior Church Club as well as a Crèche each week at 11am.

Hector Dickson is on holiday throughout June, whilst David Black is off in August.

Our guest Preacher on 14th June will be Rev Stephen Pacitti, who will conduct the Communion service that day.

There will be no July or August issue of VISION. The next issue will be the September issue, for which the copy date will be 16th August.

Minister's Message

The General Assembly of 2009 may well prove to be a watershed in the annals of church history.

You will know from the media coverage of the major issue which has divided the church, at least in its thinking if not yet in its actuality. However, like all those who are servants of the church, I am bound not to discuss the matter in public for the next two years.

What I can say is that the assembly did discuss, deliberate, and even manage to laugh together over many more issues and situations which are a cause of joy and hope as well as sorrow for the church as a body.

We reaffirmed our commitment to put poverty at the heart of the church's engagement with the community of Scotland around us; to make the church a more welcoming place for children, to provide better safeguarding for all who are vulnerable in the church; and perhaps most important of all to recognise that the gap between what we want to provide in terms of ministry and the availability of finance and personnel for such is a yawning chasm.

The credit crunch is not solely to blame and the church has woken up to the fact that even more radical plans may be needed if we are to remain true to the reformers' ideal of having "a kirk in every parish". New forms of ministry are needed to engage with the people of Scotland who wonder what we are all about, and what "Good News" there is for them in the message we claim to believe.

I write this looking ahead to preaching on Pentecost the birth of the church, the coming of the Holy Spirit, how we need to be open to the new things that the radical, life giving Spirit is saying to the church, to us and to the world, this year and in the years ahead.

With all good wishes

David R. Black

General Assembly I

a preview

VISION goes to print before the General Assembly adjourns on 27th May. Little therefore can be reported in this issue, though a 'stop press' article by the Minister appears on the next page.

The new Moderator is the Right Reverend William Hewitt, Minister of Westburn in Greenock. As a former Convener of the Business Committee he brings to his new appointment valuable experience both of Assembly procedure and of parish ministry.

The May Life and Work summarises some of the reports he will hear debated during the Assembly. These include:-

- **Stewardship and Finance:** offerings up by less than 1% - *concern that 35% of Church of Scotland charges support the other 65%* - the proposal to revise the congregational allocations based on income.
- **Ministries Council:** the number of applicants for all types of ministry down on the 2007 figure; - *the question of 'Ordained Local Ministry'* - the future of tenure - *an increase to all stipends of £900 - this could only be funded by dipping into reserves.*
- **Social Care:** CrossReach struggles to cope with reduced income and loss of key personnel - *Care Commission's gradings for Cross-Reach's residential services range from 'good' to 'excellent', with none 'weak' or 'unsatisfactory'.*
- **The Guild:** The 2008/2009 theme was 'He restores my soul' – *six charitable projects supported, including Leprosy Mission Scotland in Nigeria and The Lydia Project* - the firm establishment of 'Guild Week' each November.

continued on page 5

General Assembly II

By The Rev. David Black

Ironically, having asked the editor to keep a page for me to reflect on the events of this year's Assembly to which I was a Commissioner, I am not allowed to comment on the most prominent issue either in public speech or in writing!

So let me tell you about the other things which we can talk about – how the church now has Trustees who will be responsible for its finances; and a new Secretary to the Assembly Council who will be effectively a chief executive in all but name, coordinating the work of all the

Councils and Committees of the church. How there are new initiatives like “emerging church” to try to engage with those who see traditional church going as a barrier to hearing the Gospel; and how we continue to make “Good News to the poor” one of our priorities in mission and in deployment of resources.

Major reports on “Singleness”, on “Forgiveness and Proportionality”, on “Addictions”, on “End of Life Issues” as well as the Ethics of Economics and Defence were presented, discussed and approved for the whole church to study and find ways of putting their recommendations into practice in each local congregation.

Then on the last day, as guest of the Lord High Commissioner, there was Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his words of challenge and inspiration.

Who knows how history will judge the events of this week, and what the future of the church will be, how inclusive or exclusive we will become as a denomination and as congregations across Scotland.

Certainly we have raised our profile in the media as never before.

This is Logos Hope



MANY readers will have heard of the O.M.* ships 'Logos' and 'Doulos'. Now comes 'Logos Hope'.

Logos Hope is many things. It is a floating library, a bookshop where perhaps for the first time in their lives people may buy good quality literature at a fraction of the normal retail price. With the help of books, from car manuals to cook books to children's novels, visitors from any of the many countries visited can learn vital skills and enhance their lives.

Logos Hope is also a source of practical help - donating supplies, building a house, offering a listening ear and in many other ways.

The crew are all professing Christians who themselves benefit from life-impacting training programmes and who share, in a rich cultural diversity, their own life-changing experiences with the communities they visit around the world. Logos Hope visited Edinburgh earlier this year.

The original Logos sailed to India in 1971. During her 17 years service she sailed 231,250 nautical miles, visiting 257 ports in 103 different countries. She ended her service when she ran aground in a storm off Chile in 1988. Her replacement Logos II retired in 2008.

MV Doulos is the biggest floating library in the world, with 3,000-5,000 books on shelf and half a million in the hold. She visited Glasgow in January 1980. She will be decommissioned next year.

Logos Hope's schedule for the rest of this year includes visiting places as far apart as Cork and Barbados.

*O.M. stands for Operation Mobilisation. It works in 100 countries, motivating and equipping people in many different ways to share God's love with people all over the world.



120th B.B.

On 9th May the 120th B.B. reunion was held at Cathcart Trinity Church.

There were a lot of people from various decades. We held a Bible Class and watched films of various B.B. camps.



It was good to meet up with people I served with in the 120th, people that I had not seen in a long time.

A booklet was given out. If anyone wants to see it please speak to me.

Alan Clark

General Assembly 2009

from page 2

- **World Mission Council:** The main theme this year has been its evangelistic commitment; *concern for Zimbabwe*; recognition that the conflict between Israel and Palestine cannot be resolved by force; *presbyteries and congregations to bring opportunities for service overseas to the attention of members*; the persecution of the Christian community in India; *the possibility that church services in Myanmar (Burma) may be banned*; that some churches (e.g. Nepal and Trinidad) are growing significantly.

Note: the above are taken from reports to be presented to the Assembly and should not be taken as decisions made by it.

giftaid it

IN the financial year ending December 2008 we received back from HM Revenue and Customs £18,066 through the Gift Aid Scheme.

I would like to thank all those who already Gift Aid their donations to the Church for raising this substantial sum for Church funds.

As usual, all who Gift Aid their donations will receive a letter from me detailing their giving. However, this year the Finance Group has decided that to reduce costs these letters will be delivered by the Elders with the Communion Cards in August. Anyone who wishes to receive their letter earlier than this should contact me.

I would encourage anyone who is a tax-payer and does not already Gift Aid their donations to think about doing so. Under the scheme a £10 donation would be worth £12.50 to the Church.

Gift Aid forms are available in the Church Hall, on the website or from me, and once completed, these enable the Church to claim back the tax on all future donations and all other donations made as far back as 6 April 2000.

Please consider Giftaiding it!

David Hart
Gift Aid Convener.

Biblical Connections

In each of the following groups all the items have a common connection. What is it?

1. (easy) James, Joseph, Simon, Judas.
2. (harder) safe, scratch or stain, stool, sovereigns.

Answers are on page 19.



The New Victoria Hospital our new specialist hospital

The New Victoria Hospital is due to open on 8th June.



Its many features include:

a Minor Injuries Unit

Out-patient care

Specialist clinics,

e.g. cardiology, diabetes, speech therapy, renal dialysis, dermatology, gynaecology, pain service,

antenatal care, occupational therapy etc.



The main blessing however will be the Day Surgical Unit. Day surgery is nothing new, but advances and development in surgery (including key-hole surgery), anaesthetics, drugs and technology make day surgery an increasingly attractive option. More than 150 procedures are routinely performed as day surgery, and this number is likely to increase.

Patients who need admission for a problem that cannot be treated on a day basis will be referred elsewhere, e.g. to the Victoria Infirmary or the Southern General.



Half the patients now attending A&E departments can be more appropriately seen at a Minor Injuries Unit, so that seriously injured patients can be seen more quickly at full-blown A&Es.



Amos a plain blunt man



Some prophets appeared on the scene as solo individuals. Abraham was the first recorded prophet. Moses received a specific and personal call to prophecy. There grew up however bands of prophets. Saul, looking for his father's donkeys, met 'a procession of prophets'. There seem to have been at times 'group inspiration and frenzy'. Later there were schools or guilds of prophets, which seemed better organized and controlled. For example Isaiah talked of 'my disciples'.

Such 'corporate prophecy' or training were not for Amos. He came from Tekoa, a few miles south of Jerusalem. Here there were rich pasture lands and orchards, where the young Amos laboured as a herdsman and as a tree dresser.

Later his prophetic work took him up north to Samaria, far from his home territory. He preached the active presence of God in all life, past, present and future. He preached morality as being more important to God than ceremony and ritual. He preached judgement on Judah, on Israel and on neighbouring countries such as Gaza, Moab, Syria, Egypt and others.

This did not make him popular with the establishment. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, told Amos, "Get out, you seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there, and do your prophesying there!" One can almost hear Amos retorting in a Yorkshire accent, "I'm a plain, blunt man! I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. But the Lord took me from tending the flocks and said, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"



The Bible does not say whether he stuck it out in Samaria or went home to Tekoa. What we do hear, after nine chapters of doom and gloom, is that the book of Amos records God's encouraging promise of reconciliation. "In that day," said the Lord, "I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its fallen places, restore its ruins and build it as it used to be."

How great is God's forbearance and forgiveness!

D.D.M.

Women's 10K



Congratulations

to all members of our congregation who took part in the Women's 10K Road Race on Sunday 10th May, and commiserations if they were caught in the appalling weather conditions during the latter part of the race.

We salute (in alphabetical order) -
Anna Robertson
Nicola Steel
Sarah Brown
Val Henderson



Jacob's Kids or The Children of Israel

There were 13 of them, twelve boys and one girl.

Just before he died, Jacob (Israel) gathered together his sons and told them one by one what would become of them.

Reuben was the oldest. In his younger days he had saved Joseph's life. Because of this he might have expected a congratulatory blessing, but all he got was a put-down, "You will not be the most important."

Simon and **Levi** had killed men in anger and received Jacob's curse, "I will scatter them throughout the land."

Zebulun was dismissed just as one living by the sea. **Issachar** was likened to a donkey, **Dan** to a snake, **Naphthali** to a deer and **Benjamin** a vicious wolf. **Gad** would be a fighter, and **Asher** a provider of food fit for a king.

Joseph would be blessed by God - blessings of rain, of deep waters, of many cattle and children, of corn and flowers, of ancient mountains and delightful things from the everlasting hills.

It was **Judah**, though, who would hold the royal sceptre, and whose descendants would always rule. Nations would bow down in obedience and bring him tribute.

When the land was divided the southern kingdom took its name from Judah. The northern kingdom was called Israel, though the name Ephraim (one of Joseph's sons) was associated with part of it.

The one girl? Well, Dinah was a woman and so was just ignored. But that's life. Was!

Down Memory Lane

- 25 Jan 1980 Jim Turner launched our Parish Development Programme
- Sep 1981 Start of '525' youth group
- 1 June 1982 Pope celebrates mass for 300,000 in Bellahouston Park
- 6 Dec 1982 Estimate for church repairs £400,000
- 23 Jan 1983 Decision to continue in Titwood complex rather than return to Kenmure
- 21 Feb 1983 £120,000 pledged for repairs;
Alex Colquhoun's first day as Church Officer
- 11 Aug 1984 525's Mission's barbecue in Maxwell Park
- 8 Jan 1985 Ken Campbell, new Church Officer
- 20 Jan 1985 Rededication of Church after renovation
- 10 Jan 1986 Church struck by lightning. Sound reinforcement system and most of organ out of action
- 2 Dec 1990 Harry Thomson's last day in pulpit; tributes etc.
- 9 Jun 1991 Phillip Earnshaw preached as sole nominee. Called unanimously.
- 29 Aug 1991 Phillip Earnshaw inducted.
- 6 Nov 1991 Early services killed off
- 29 Dec 1991 Last Early Service, after about 12 years.
'*Ichabod!*' included songs by 'The Tree Piece Sweet' – Marion Christie, Alison Hay and Susan Turner
- 22 Feb 1997 David Black preached as sole nominee and was called 'nem con'.
- 17 Apr 1997 David Black's induction and social

Colin Johnston - Zambia

March 2009

PO Box 21225
KITWE
Republic of Zambia

Greetings from Kitwe!

The first few months of the year are always hectic, as we begin a new session and welcome new students. As Dean, I have to make sure the timetable flows smoothly with lecturers turning up at the right time and teaching what they are supposed to (not always the case!). Numbers are down slightly, as twelve students graduated last year, but there are only seven in the first year.. At least there are two women in the intake, as last year there weren't any in the ministerial group. Somehow there is a good atmosphere around the place. Except that is for Makerere...!

At present our degrees and diplomas are validated by the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, but 15 years ago the College had a relationship with Makerere University in Uganda, which validated the diplomas.

The relationship turned sour, however, and many of the students never received their diplomas, despite studying for four years and passing. There is a massive file in my office, full of correspondence

from previous deans, trying to sort out the problem.

I myself have emailed, sent formal letters, phoned, but all to no avail. I cannot believe that ALL the emails have been lost in cyberspace or that ALL the letters have been lost in the postal system, so I find myself bewildered by their lack of response.

Meanwhile the students (now ministers) involved have found it difficult to pursue further studies because they do not have their diplomas! Two in particular, who have just finished three years studying for a degree, will not graduate this year, because they cannot prove that they successfully gained a diploma, so for their sakes if no-one else's, I will probably have to travel to Uganda to try to work out a way forward.

Zambians are great talkers, liking nothing better than to discuss the political situation. The topic of the day is, needless to say the credit crunch. This is not an exclusively Western phenomenon, as Africa is very much affected as well.

No-one seems to want to buy Zambian copper any more, and the price has plummeted from \$9,000 last year to \$3,000 this year. This has had enormous implications, as copper makes up roughly 90% of Zambia's exports. At the end of last year, the mines started to send away the casual workers. Then came the job losses, as workers were made redundant. And in the case of Luanshya, a town near Kitwe, the mine has closed completely. So many businesses are dependent on the mines, so there is an air of depression, even desperation, around the Copperbelt. Sadly with so many people becoming unemployed, a number of people turn to crime to make ends meet.

Kennedy is a friend who worked in security in the mines, but was made redundant last year. It has had a tremendous effect on him, as he cannot find any other work. He sold his car, and now he may have to sell his house. The tension has sadly put pressure on his marriage, and his wife is suing for divorce.

For a long time now, everyone has said that Zambia's economy has been too dependent on the mines and that there was need to diversify. However, it seems that all sections of the economy are suffering. Some of the much-vaunted 'luxury' goods for export like roses, coffee and small vegetables have all been hit, with my favourite coffee grower going bust and many of the horticulturalists finding it cheaper to destroy their blooms rather than send them to Europe.

The local currency, the kwacha, means 'dawn', but I am afraid that these days it is more like 'sunset' as it has plummeted against the major currencies. I am sure that Zambia is one of the few places where the pound sterling is actually getting stronger!

On a personal level, I have now been in Zambia for over 15 years, having arrived at the beginning of February 1994. I could now apply for Zambian residency, but I won't. In fact, I have come to the decision that I would like to remain with World Mission, but move to another country.

Continued on page 16

Gardens

“God Almighty first planted a garden; and indeed it is the purest of human pleasures.”Francis Bacon

The earth is damp and dark and unfriendly. The November rains and the December frosts have given the January garden the look of neglect and death.

Then suddenly a tiny green spike appears out of the bare earth, and then another. Before long shoots of aconites, snowdrops and crocuses compete with each other to proclaim the approach of spring colours.

April and May provide carpets of bluebells with patches of multicoloured bedding delights.

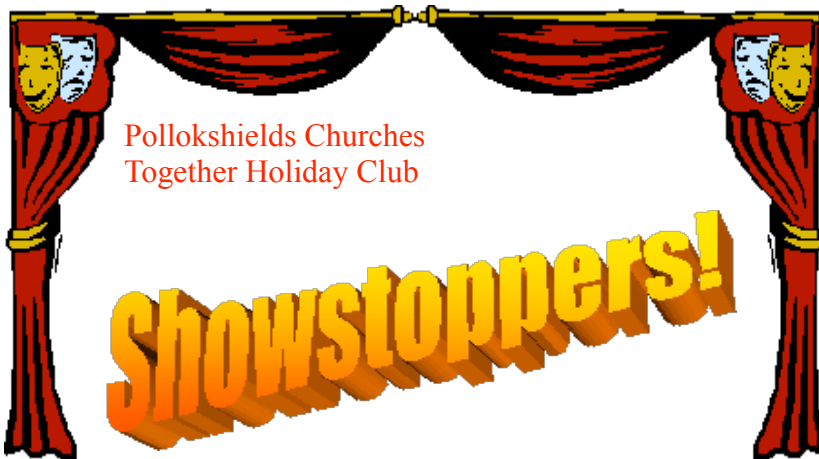
Then before we realise it **“June is busting out all over!”** and only the most curmudgeonly of atheists could deny the evidence of God’s grace, as his flowers like the heavens declare “the glory of God” and like the skies “proclaim his handiwork!” “Flowers appear on the earth; the season of spring has come.”



Some flowers are perhaps uninspiring, but others, with their generous forms, their vibrant colours and the delicacy and purity of their blossoms show their divine origin. Jesus made the point that “Even Solomon in all his glory was not attired like one of these.”



Whether we plant flowers in our front gardens or in modest window boxes, or simply sit and enjoy the displays put on in parks and other public place, we can thank God for something to lift up our hearts.



Pollokshields Churches
Together Holiday Club

August 10th -14th 10am to 12 noon
in Pollokshields Parish Church hall

*Exploring Our World
in a five-act drama*

Mon 10th August - Act 1..... Creation
Tues 11th August - Act 2.....David
Wed 12th August - Act 3.....Daniel
Thur 13th August - Act 4.....Christ's Birth
Fri 14th August - Act 5.....Christ's death
and resurrection

Programme will include singing, storytelling, drama, crafts, Bible teaching and (of course!) refreshments.

All children from P2 to S1 will be welcome

from page 13

I am already in negotiations over a position but everything has still to be confirmed. I will let you know once everything becomes a bit clearer.

It will of course be traumatic to leave Zambia after all this time. I have become Zambianised in many ways, and it will be a wrench to leave people, some of whom, I have known since I arrived. I am sure I will be consumed with feelings of guilt and disloyalty, which rationally should not be the case, but, hey, we are human. At the moment I am trying not to think of it, and that is quite easy to do, as there is a lot happening around the College in the next few months. We are planning to have an open day at the end of March, which we hope will generate some

interest in the College. That will be followed the following day by our retreat, and then a symposium organised by the Council of Churches on Social Teaching for various ‘theologians’ among member churches. Round about that time, we will be welcoming a Methodist student from Birmingham, who is going to spend a few months studying at the College. In between will be all the routine work of teaching and marking.

I hope to return to Scotland at the beginning of June, so will look forward to being with you at some point over the summer. However I am sure I will be in touch before then.

Every blessing,
Colin



Copper ore being loaded on to a 30-ton truck for transport to the crusher

The primary crusher at a copper mine



Places in the Bible

Goshen

The Suez Canal - if you were to sail up the Suez Canal you would be passing through what used to be Goshen, in the great Nile Delta.

Joseph had become Egypt's Prime Minister and had brought his family to Egypt. The Pharaoh settled them in Goshen. Every time the Nile flooded tons of silt were washed down into the delta.

This made the land there ideal pasturage. For 400 years the Israelites lived there in peace and prosperity. They fed well, too, for when they were wandering in the wilderness they thought longingly of the food they had enjoyed in Egypt - "the delicious fish, the wonderful cucumbers and melons, leeks, onions and garlic"

"For 400 years the Israelites lived there in peace and prosperity."

This did not last. It was not just the land that was fertile. The Israelites too multiplied so much that the new

Pharaoh became worried. He saw them as a risk to national security. He enslaved them and used them to build cities like Pithom and Rameses. (The water in the Nile delta must have been shallow enough for both slaves and slave drivers to cross whenever necessary.)

This enslavement lasted for about 80 years. Then Moses led them out of Egypt, heading for the Promised Land.

A final note about Goshen - the Israelites living there in the land to the east of the Nile were immune to many of the plagues that afflicted the Egyptians living west of the delta. Flies, the disease that killed all kinds of animals, hail, locusts and darkness, and finally the angel of death seemed to recognise Goshen as a no-go area.

The exodus from Goshen that followed is still remembered and celebrated by Jews as the great turning point in their history.

D.D.M.



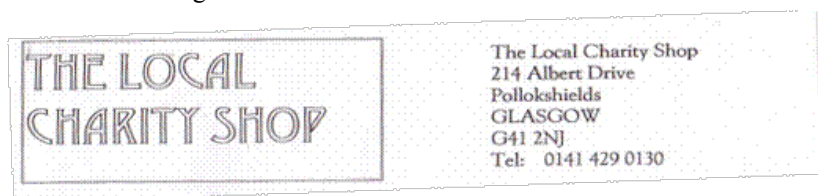
“The Ph**ant**om strikes again!”

It’s true! Once again we have **ants** in our p’**ant**’ry - or to be more precise in our kitchen.

Leaders of all organisations have been asked to be extra careful to ensure that no crumbs, sugar or sweet fragments etc. are left on floors or worktops.

This same plea is extended to all who may use the kitchen.

We must all be vigil**ant**.



In April the ladies of the shop with some of our friends from the Glasgow Branch of *Enable* had a night out at Hags Clubhouse. The meal was excellent, the sun shone, the company was congenial and it was a very enjoyable evening.

Despite the recession we have had quite a good year and we plan to send cheques to the following charities:-

Enable Glasgow Branch £12,584

Leukaemia Research £ 500

Yorkhill Children’s Foundation £500

Visibility £400

Pollokshields Church £240

Erskine Hospital £ 500

C.H.A.S. £400

Forest House £400

Scottish S.P.C.A. £245

We are able to do this as we pay no wages and our Directors get no fees and take no expenses.

We look forward to your continued support. Have a nice summer.

J. Provan

Points for Prayer

<i>For the World</i>	that there may be an end to death from hunger and from strife.
<i>For our Country.</i>	That we may learn from the errors of our Members of Parliament and scrutinise our own moral values.
<i>For our Church</i>	that our Kirk Session 'Groups' may be open to the Holy Spirit and be efficient and effective.
<i>For our Minister</i>	that he may be given the wisdom and the energy to cope with the needs both of the Congregation and with outside committees and organisations.
<i>For Ourselves</i>	that we may realise the danger of 'small' sins.
<i>For our Missionary Partner, the Rev. Colin Johnston,</i>	that he may be guided wisely in his choice of future career.
<i>Give thanks</i>	for our ministry team and the place there is in it for each one of us.

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6 6

Answers to 'Biblical Connections' on page 6

- 1. All were Jesus' brothers (Matthew 13.55)*
- 2. All were books of the Bible (Peter, Mark, Job, Kings)*

PRAISE GATHERING

400 singers from 128 churches
Fri 12, Sat 13, Sun 14 of June
Glasgow Royal Concert Hall



Views expressed by contributors are their own
and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors
nor of The Church of Scotland

*The purpose of VISION is to record the life and work of the congregation.
No editors on their own can know all that people do and
feel and want, so it is up to you, whether you are an office bearer,
the leader of an organisation or an ordinary member, to keep us
informed.*

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***Send us original articles, views, snippets of news –
anything you would like to share with other people***

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