



Lochgilphead Parish Church

The LINK

Volume 6 Issue 5

June 2008



Message From the Manse

Dear Friends,

What fantastic weather we've been having. The view from the manse has been stunning but even more spectacular has been the scene in our back garden. New life is everywhere we look. The young starlings are going through fat balls like they are going out of fashion. There have been at least five young families to say nothing of the sparrows, the coal tits and the blackbirds. They are just amazing to watch.

Seeing how dependent those young birds are on their parents in the early days, it's amazing to think that in a very short space of time, they will take off on what for most of us would be the journey of a lifetime. It's an enormous undertaking and although some of the birds won't make the journey, many of them will.

But you know, in a recent children's address, it was stressed how important it is to stay focused and not allow ourselves to become distracted. It is the only way to reach the winning post and that is not about coming in first, but about doing our very best and pressing on towards our goal.

As a congregation, we are involved in a journey of renewal. It's bigger than our renovation work and bigger than our outreach and it won't end when our 20/10 vision is realised. Renewal is our calling, a calling to become Christ-like and a calling to reflect something of God's love to those around us.

When we think of the birds and their journey, we know that it will take preparation, commitment, focus, and a great deal of effort on the part of each one. Can we mirror the birds by demonstrating the same commitment, focus and effort? There is a great deal of preparation going on but the end result depends on each of us. I'm excited about our journey and hope that you share my enthusiasm.

This is the last letter I shall write until September which is hard to believe but I hope that each of you has a wonderful summer. Enjoy the beauty of God's creation and the miracle of life around us as you reflect on your journey with us.

With very best wishes,

Hilda C. Smith

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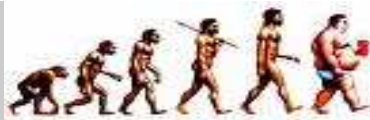


When were you last hugged? A recent study has found that everyone needs at least one hug a day in order to cope with the stress of modern life.

Yet a third of people in the UK receive no daily cuddle. And three quarters of us wish that we were hugged more than we are. In families, younger members get most of the hugs, with parents often left out. After the age of 11, hugs decrease.

These are the findings of a survey by scientists at Manchester Metropolitan University. "Britain has forgotten how to hug," said one senior psychologist. "We are out of the habit. And yet a hug is an important part of life. We are basically animals and so need physical contact just as animals do." 'Political correctness' is blamed, because hugging people can be seen as "inappropriate."

A Theory of Creation



God created the mule, and told him, "You will be mule, working constantly from dusk to dawn, carrying heavy loads on your back. You will eat grass and lack intelligence. You will live for 50 years."

The mule answered, "To live like this for 50 years is too much. Please, give me no more than 20." And it was so.

Then God created the dog, and told him, "You will hold vigilance over the dwellings of Man, to whom you will be his greatest companion. You will eat his table scraps and live for 25 years."

And the dog responded, "Lord, to live 25 years as a dog like that is too much. Please, no more than 10 years." And it was so.

God then created the monkey, and told him, "You are a monkey. You shall swing from tree to tree, acting like an idiot. You will be funny, and you shall live for 20 years."

And the monkey responded, "Lord, to live 20 years as the clown of the world is too much. Please, Lord, give me no more than 10 years." And it was so.

Finally, God created Man and told him, "You are Man, the only rational being that walks the earth. You will use your intelligence to have mastery over the creatures of the world. You will dominate the earth and live for 20 years."

And the man responded, "Lord, to be Man for only 20 years is too little. Please, Lord, give me the 30 years the mule refused, the 15 years the dog refused, and the 10 years the monkey rejected." And it was so.

And so God made Man to live 20 years as a man, then marry and live 30 years like a mule working and carrying heavy loads on his back. Then, he is to have children and live 15 years as a dog, guarding his house and eating the leftovers after they empty the pantry; then, in his old age, to live 10 years as a monkey, acting like an idiot to amuse his grand children.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL



At the Roadshow held in Paisley Abbey on 29th April, the Worship & Doctrine Committee presented various thoughts on our communion tradition, followed by discussion and questions from the people attending. There were clergy, elders, church members and one or two of other faiths at this event and the points raised were many.

The issues presented to us were:

- What is good in our communion tradition?
- Where is there room for change and innovation?
- How well do we do Word *and* Sacrament?
- What does communion mean to you?

There are differing practices by Ministers in the Church of Scotland – 5 liturgies are available to them to follow from the Book of Common Order – but it is their choice which one to adopt. Hence when a vacancy is filled, you could find the communion service varying from what you normally know. This brings us to traditions – old versus the new – but then new traditions can also grow to be old. Is Communion becoming less formal and is this necessarily a bad thing – after all too many concerns about doing it the 'correct' way could very well detract from the occasion. Apart from the number of times Communion could be held a year (and this again differs enormously from congregation to congregation) should we consider coming forward to receive Communion as opposed to being served Communion by others? It was generally agreed that Communion in a small company was an altogether more personal experience but then, not particularly practical for larger congregations. Many congregations already have children celebrating Communion with them and it doesn't pose a problem, although preferably they would have been baptised into the Church.

As you can see, many issues are pertinent to the subject. However, the conclusion by all was that although it is all about choices, of paramount importance is being together in the presence of the Lord.

It would be interesting to hear the views of individuals in our own congregation as opposed to the learned 'churchspeak' of Ministers and officials of the Worship and Doctrine Group. Communion is after all an individual experience felt in many different ways, but in the company of others in fellowship in the presence of Jesus. Do WE feel that presence as we would hope to?

Mary MacDonald

AMAZON ADVENTURE (the easy way - cont.)

By Mary Macdonald

I learnt many things this trip. The Amazon River's source, believe it or not, used to be in Africa, but this was 300 million years ago before the continents shifted into the position we know today. It's a mucky river with all sorts of flotsam on the water, logs, trees, branches etc and is an orangey brown muddy colour. At Manaus and Santarem both, there is what is known as the Meeting of the Waters – where the River Negro and Amazon meet. An amazing sight, it's like a line has been drawn in the water with two different colours on each side running alongside each other.



Humidity in this part of the world is 90% with summer temperatures between 45 and 50 degrees. Rainy season is from October to May but we were very lucky and only saw a couple of tropical storms. I can tell you it was just like the rain in Argyll coming down in sheets! The Mosquito problem is not so bad in River Negro because of the high acidity in the water (which is one blessing?) so that wasn't the problem we had been anticipating.

The population of Brazil is 185 million of which 56% are uneducated and can't read or write. There are 43 different indigenous tribes of Indians and they are treated differently in every way from the other Brazilians and are regarded as second class citizens. Portuguese is the official language of Brazil but each tribe has its own language, none of which are related to Portuguese. All male Brazilians, between the ages of 18 & 19, apart from the native Indians, have to do military/naval service.

The mouth of the Amazon is a staggering 300 miles wide where it joins the Atlantic Ocean at Belem. The level of the Amazon can change by 16 metres winter to summer because of the heavy silt deposits. Therefore it follows that the depth of the many tributaries can change passages dramatically each year, which means local river pilots are always needed to guide large ships through the proper channels and they have to stay with the ships as far as Devil's Island.

This for me was a highlight of the cruise. Devil's Island (Ile Royale) is one of a small group of three known as the Salvation Islands belonging to French Guyana and was established in 1852 as a French penal colony. The prisoners here included Alfred Dreyfuss who was imprisoned wrongly for treason and Henri Charriere, whose famous book Papillon, depicting his adventures, was later made into a film which is always shown on TV on heydays and holidays. Maybe I just remember it for Steve McQueen! All that is left of the prison now of course is ruins, but strangely enough, despite the atrocities that must have



taken place here, there is an air of tranquillity about the island now. It was a very pleasant place to wander round and spend the day.

We had left the Amazon by now and were sailing up the east coast of S America, crossing the Equator as we travelled. There was a Crossing the Line ceremony on-board which was just a bit of nonsense to pass the time on our two days as sea before reaching our next destination of Scarborough, the capital of Tobago. Two thirds of the island is a natural protected forest and is quite lovely. But the only thing that really impressed me here were the school children who were all very neat in their school uniform.

Our second last port of call was at St Lucia and we took an Aerial Tram through the Rain Forest which was just spectacular. I will have to go back there to explore the island properly.

Last but not least, St Barts – playground of the rich which is obvious from the pristine harbour with the huge yachts and waterfront and genuine Designer Stores where all the world-wide names are represented. It would be an experience to live like the other half but you can only look.



What a contrast to the people of the Amazon. Two worlds really.

We left St Barts for another two days onboard, sailing back to Port Everglades, Miami and the long journey home.

The experiences of that holiday will stay with me for a long time. Something only before seen on television had been brought to life in no uncertain way and left an overwhelming impression of hardship but also of acceptance, which is truly humbling.

COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to everyone who made our Coffee Morning on May 24th such a success. Between the door money, the sales table and the raffle we took £404.50 and after deduct-



ing costs we still had £389. This was the first Coffee Morning during which we held a raffle and this yielded an amazing £80. it is our intention to continue holding a raffle at future coffee Morning, so we will be pleased to receive donations of prizes.

The next Coffee Morning, table sale and raffle will be held in the Church Hall on Saturday

June 14th, 10.00am - 12.00 noon

Christianity and Environmental Sustainability

Many Christians are concerned about the environment and are keen to learn what they can do as individuals and as a congregation, so what are we doing? Probably more than you think!



The Kirk Session are keen to pursue recognition of the Church as an Eco-Congregation. As we do so, we will be guided by Eco-Congregation Scotland, an ecumenical programme which helps congregations understand environmental issues and make appropriate practical and spiritual responses. Amongst those things which will help gain the desired Eco-Congregation accreditation are

1. Regularly including care for God's creation and environmental concerns in our worship.
2. Informing, inspiring and encouraging youngsters in our work with children
3. Monitoring energy use and costs
4. Recycling waste generated in the Hall and Kitchen
5. Providing collection facilities for recycling of items for which there is not ready access in the community batteries, printer cartridges, mobile phones)
6. Organising the "rag bag" collection to promote the re-use and recycling of clothing
7. Publishing "green tips" on environmental care and encouraging re-use and recycling, in the Link

... and in the future, we can look forward to

1. A "new" building designed with the environment in mind, not only in terms of sustainable building materials, but with energy management and conservation in mind
2. Outdoor worship, focussing our thoughts on God's creation, and
3. Enhancing the Church grounds with a dedicated planting scheme focussing on local plant species which will support and encourage biodiversity

Want to learn more? Then have a look at the following websites:

Eco-Congregation Scotland ~ www.ecocongregation.org.uk/scotland

A Rocha ~ www.arocha.org.uk

Christian Ecology ~ www.christian-ecology.org.uk

The John Ray Initiative ~ www.jri.org.uk

Beavers Get The Go Ahead

The Scottish Government has given the go-ahead for up to four beaver families to be released in Knapdale, Argyll, on a trial basis.

The beavers which will come from Norway, will be captured in autumn 2008 and put into quarantine for six months before three or four families before their release in the Spring of 2009.



The beavers will be released into the Knapdale Wildlife Reserve, in a project which will be run by the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (Edinburgh Zoo), with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) monitoring the project.

Supporters of their re-introduction believe that beaver was hunted to extinction in this country in the 16th Century. Other parts of Europe, with a similar landscape to Scotland, which have reintroduced beavers have found that they have positive ecological benefits, such as creating and maintaining a habitat hospitable to other species enhancing local biodiversity. The project could well attract tourists who would be interested in learning more about the project, in a similar way to the Ospreys at Boat of Garten, for example.

We should all be concerned about the future - because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there.

Charles Kettering

Joint Session Clerk

At the last meeting of the Session it was agreed that a Joint Session Clerk should be appointed.

Mr. Sandy Taylor has agreed to share this responsibility with Mr. Jim Kirk



Rag Bag Collection Saturday June 7th

Remember to pack up your bags and take them to the Church Hall on Saturday June 7th.

The van will collect all the donated items on Thursday June 12th.

Intelligence

By George Carlin (American comedian)

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbour. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things.

We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stock room. A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete...

Remember; spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever.

Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side.

Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent.

Remember, to say, "I love you" to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you.

Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again.

Give time to love, give time to speak! And give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER:

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

CAR SERVICE

It has been agreed that we will endeavour to provide a car service to and from Church for anyone who is unable to attend services due to infirmity or age.



If you wish to avail yourself of this service please contact your Elder or Tom Stevenson (Tel: 01546 600259) and we will do our best to get you to and from Church.

If you are a driver and have a spare seat in your car and are willing to lift someone on Sunday mornings to and from Church, please contact me.

Tom Stevenson

Our Suffering Oak Trees

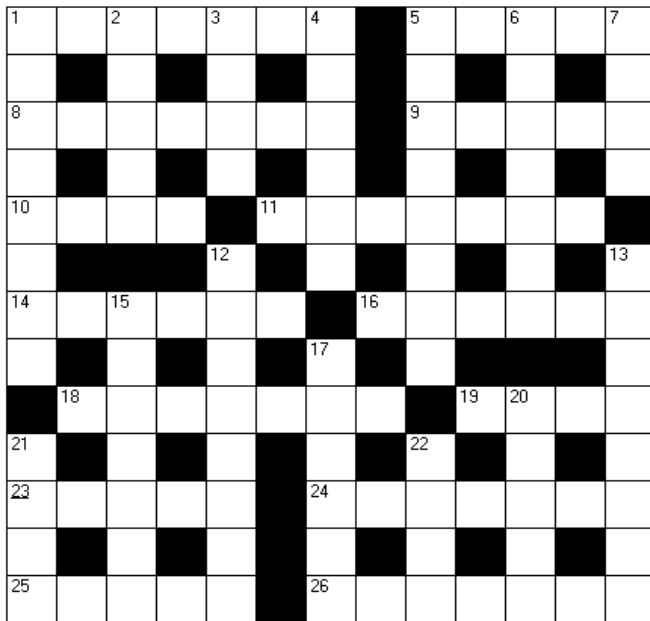
Our oak trees are in trouble. A devastating disease is advancing through our country's forests, affecting at least 100 areas, and threatening the very life of thousands of oak trees.



It is virulent and it is called oak decline. It slowly kills the plant from the top down, and experts fear that global warming will increase the spread of the disease. Some experts even predict that oak decline could prove as devastating as Dutch elm disease did in the 1970s.

The Forestry Commission has launched an investigation, and is urging people to notify officials of any sign of the disease. The first sign of oak decline is a yellowing of the foliage. Leaves then start to thin, and the plants dies from the top downwards. Cankers in the trunk can bleed a black, pus-like liquid. Oak decline weakens the tree's ability to fight attacks from insects or fungi. Trees that should live for 400 years are dying at 40. From first signs to death, it can take only three years.

Crossword



Across

- 1 ..who has died a _____ death (Num 19.16) (7)
 5 Bent the body, like Moses in Exodus ch. 34 (5)
 8 Father of James and John in Mathew ch. 4 (7)
 9 Drink made from apples (5)
 10 In Genesis ch. 7 it fell for forty days (4)
 11 King of Israel renowned for his wisdom (7)
 14 Weight equal to 60 minas (6)
 16 1 Peter ch. 3 describes a wife as such a partner (6)
 18 What the fishermen were doing to their nets in Luke ch. 5 (7)
 19 Of which Og's bed was made in Deuteronomy ch. 3 (4)
 23 Burnt remains eaten as food in Psalm 102 (5)
 24 King Xerxes imposed _____ (Esth 10.1) (7)
 25 Had the necessary courage (5)
 26 eg Christmas or Easter (7)

Down

- 1 Jesus' home town (8)
 2 Son of Ginath in 1 Kings ch. 16 (5)
 3 ..no galley with oars will ____ them (Isa 33.21) (4)
 4 Remain in hiding (3,3)
 5 Made a summoning gesture (8)
 6 Matrimony (7)
 7 Like the clouds in Psalm 18 (4)
 12 Showed great excitement (8)
 13 Like the mansions in Psalm 49 (8)
 15 John the Baptist's belt was made of this (7)
 17 As heat and drought _____ awat the mented snow (Job 24.19) (6)
 20 Circular, like the loaf of barley bread in Judges ch. 7 (5)
 21 A disembodied one wrote on the wall in Daniel ch. 5 (4)
 22 Cultivate the soil (4)

Thank You

Chris Stevenson would like to thank the Church for the lovely flowers received during her short stay in hospital

Laughter Lines



Noah & the Ark

God: Hi! Noah

Noah: Good morning, God

God: Fancy building me another ark?

Noah: Okay... if ya like... same spec as last time?

God: Nah... I fancy something a little different this time

Noah: You're the boss... what would you like?

God: Hmmm... okay this time I want a 20 storey ark...

Noah: 20 storeys? My, that's pretty big...

God: Yup, 20 storeys... that should do it...

Noah: And you want me to fill it with animals like last time?

God: Yeah go on then... actually no...

Noah: No?

God: Not like last time... this time I want it full of fish...

Noah: Fish? Okay... whatever you say, goes...

God: Good... but hmmm... I don't just want any kind of fish... I want it full of carp...

Noah: Okay... let me get this straight... you want me to build a 20 storey high ark & fill it full of carp... right?

God: Yup that's it... a multi-storey carp ark...

Populating the Earth

After a few days, the Lord called to Adam and said, "It is time for you and Eve to begin the process of populating the earth so I want you to kiss her."

Adam answered, "Yes Lord, but what is a kiss?" So the Lord gave a brief description to Adam who took Eve by the hand and took her to a nearby bush.

A few minutes later, Adam emerged and said, "Thank you Lord, that was enjoyable."

And the Lord replied, "Yes Adam, I thought you might enjoy that and now I'd like you to caress Eve."

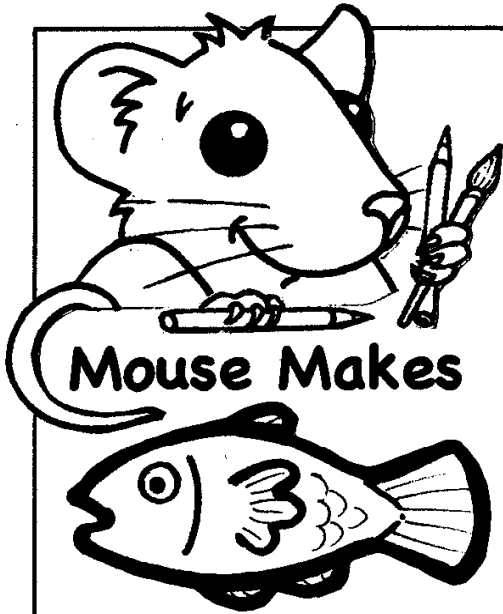
And Adam said, "What is a 'caress'? So the Lord again gave Adam a brief description and Adam went behind the bush with Eve.

Quite a few minutes later, Adam returned, smiling, and said, "Lord, that was even better than the kiss."

And the Lord said, "You've done well Adam. And now I want you to make love to Eve."

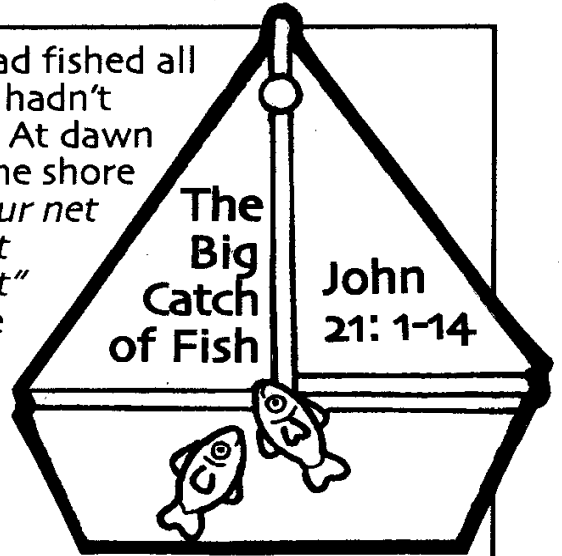
And Adam asked, "What is 'make love' Lord?" So the Lord again gave Adam directions and Adam went again to Eve behind the bush, but this time he reappeared in two seconds.

And Adam said, "Lord, what is a 'headache'?"



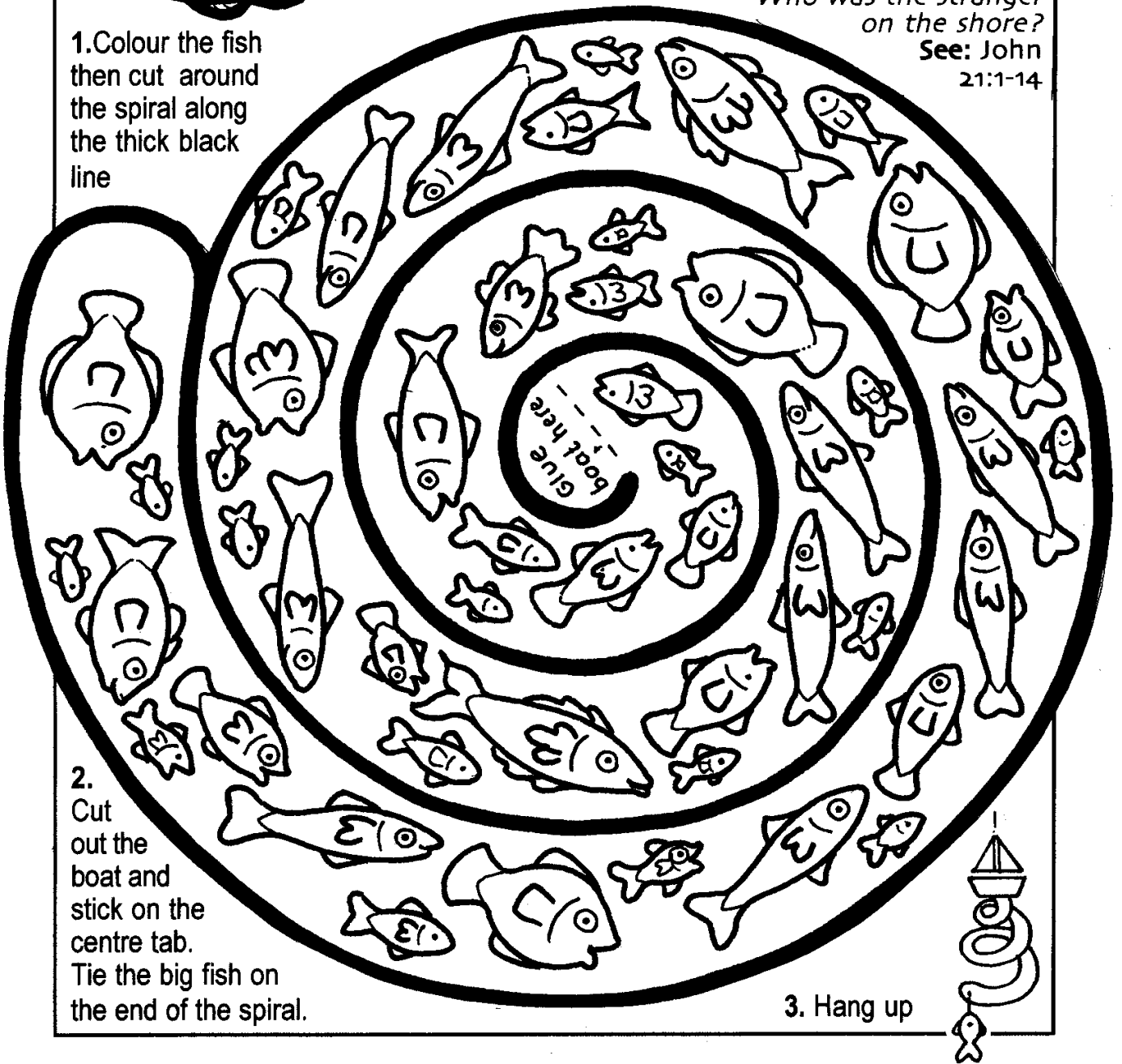
Mouse Makes

The disciples had fished all night, but they hadn't caught a thing. At dawn a stranger on the shore said "Throw your net out on the right side of the boat" They threw the net but could not pull it back in because it was so full of fish!



Who was the stranger on the shore?
See: John 21:1-14

1. Colour the fish then cut around the spiral along the thick black line



2. Cut out the boat and stick on the centre tab. Tie the big fish on the end of the spiral.

3. Hang up

Rotas for June 2008

	Door Duty	Flowers (Contact E Armstrong)	Readers	Tea/Coffee Duty
June 1st	J Kirk & B Kirk	M Hutchison	E Armstrong	S Taylor & M Taylor
June 8th	R Morrison & F Fleming	I McArthur	R Morrison	J Kirk & B Kirk
June 15th	F Killeen & A Pearson	tba	J Comben	J Morrison & R Morrison
June 22nd	M MacDonald & M Taylor	tba	T Stevenson	M Davidson & I Davidson
June 29th	A Emslie & I MacArthur	tba	I MacArthur	R Morrison & S Morrison
July 6th	I Davidson & M Davidson	tba	I Davidson	S. Taylor & M Taylor

If you are unable to carry out any of these duties please arrange a replacement.

What's on in June

Services (all at 11.00am except where stated)

June 1st	Rev. Hilda Smith
June 8th	Rev. Hilda Smith
June 15th	Rev. David Carruthers Pulpit Exchange
June 22nd	Rev. Hilda Smith
June 29th	Rev. Hilda Smith

Other events

June 1st	Sponsored Walk & BBQ
June 7th	Rag Bag Collection
June 8th	Toucan Club 4.00pm-5.00pm
June 11th	Session Meeting, 7.30pm
June 14th	Coffee Morning & Raffle
June 18th	Congregational Board Meeting, 7.30pm
June 22nd	Toucan Club 4.00pm-5.00pm

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across	1 Natural 5 Bowed 8 Zebedee 9 Cider 10 Rain 11 Solomon 14 Talent 16 Weaker 18 Washing 19 Iron 23 Ashes 24 Tribute 25 Dared 26 Holiday Down 1 Nazareth 2 Thim 3 Ride 4 Lie low 5 Beckoned 6 Wedlock 7 Dark 12 Enthused 13 Princely 15 Leather 17 Snatch 20 Round 21 Hand 22 Till
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..... and for your diary

July 7th	MAAA Guitar Concert in the Church
August 24th	Church Picnic
August 30th	Church Autumn Fete
September	Songs From the Shows
December 7th	Christmas Lunch

Who's Who in LPC

Minister	Rev Hilda C Smith	01546 602238
Session Clerks	Jim Kirk & Sandy Taylor	01546 602524 01546 606218
Clerk to the Congregational Board	Mary MacDonald	01546 602087
Treasurer	Edna Armstrong	01546 602600
Fabric Convenor	Ian Davidson	01546 603784
Fund Raising Convenor	Tom Stevenson	01546 600259
Social Convenor	Roddy Morrison	01546 603972
Guild Contact	Frances Fleming	01546 602270
Free Will Offering Organiser	Alex Emslie	01546 603820
Hall Bookings	Bill Kennedy	01546 602875

Committees 2008 - 09

Finance	Edna Armstrong, Alex Emslie, Mary MacDonald, Roddy Morrison,
Fabric	Ian Davidson, Frances Fleming, Bill Kennedy, Joyce Munro, Allison Pearson
Social	Margaret Davidson, Malcolm MacFadyen, Roddy Morrison, Helen Samborek May Taylor
Fundraising	Tom Stevenson, Betty Kirk, Jim Kirk, Ishbel McArthur, Jessie Cranston, Chris Stevenson
Project Team	Sandy Taylor, Rev. Hilda Smith, Fabric Convenor, Treasurer, Clerk to the Board