



St. Paul's Matters

October 2015

St Paul's Scottish Episcopal Church (part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion),
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From the Rector:

As you read on in this month's magazine, you will notice just how much has been going on at St Paul's, by the people of St Paul's. Just look at the remarkable transformation that a good fresh lick of bright white paint has already achieved on the West wall, and indeed throughout the building. St Paul's has been given a decent push along the road to a new lease of life. I am very excited about the God-inspired, Spirit-driven potential that is building up among us in preparation for great things yet to come. In the coming days we will be extending our welcome and friendship to our community through our Harvest Festival and Pet Service. The little Midweek service group is beginning to blossom and grow. Much energy and enthusiasm continues to buzz around the future Vision for St Paul's building as a more flexible worship space and a greater community resource. However all our hopes and dreams and exciting initiatives will only have any real lasting meaning if we keep on reminding ourselves about the 'Why?' that needs to be the driver and foundation for what it is that we want to do.

If St Paul's wanted to adopt a Mission statement, there are plenty of very worthy and wordy examples out there that we could choose from. Part of us might secretly like to adopt the motto from Trinity College's crest for life in general – 'Semper eadem' *'Some change is good. No change is better.* In terms of faithful discipleship, that way leads to a gloomy demise. The best one I've come across to date is lifted from another of my previous jobs. Canterbury Cathedral's Mission statement is this, 'To show people Jesus'. That's it. This aim is distilled from the Gospel story of some Greeks who accosted Philip and Andrew in the hope that they might see Jesus. The two disciples duly obliged.

Before they brought those Greeks to see Jesus, the disciples needed to be convinced that they were doing the right thing. They had Jesus in the flesh. We can only adopt such a clear conviction through regular (and reasonably frequent!) prayer. I believe most deeply that our developing Vision will only ever come to its glorious fruition when we get on with our praying. No doubt I am preaching to the converted but we can all 'fall off the wagon' from time to time! Those of us who meet together at 8am on Monday and Wednesday mornings have noticed a very tangible but indescribable difference in the building's Spirit. I very much hope you can sense it too. Something is undoubtedly taking place in our feisty little church *because we do what we do and not because we're any better at it than anyone else.*

If you and I are truly committed to our core to show Jesus in our community by what we say and do, and it's not merely something that you hear me droning on about *ad nauseam*, then our hopes and dreams and initiatives will undoubtedly bear much (and lasting) fruit. Thank you in advance!

How to contact our Rector

David can be contacted on 01577 863795 or via e-mail at

frdavidkinross@gmail.com

The Rector's hour is usually 3:30pm-4:30pm every Thursday in the Church Office beside the Church. Changes to this will be notified on the Church's website.

David normally takes Friday as his day off

The St Paul's website is www.stpauls-kinross.co.uk

Services during October

St Paul's is open, friendly and welcoming **to all age groups** (whether regular churchgoers or if you're simply inquisitive about who we are and what we do.)

We are excited about the ways in which God is calling us to grow as a community, for the community. Our aim is to express our deep appreciation of both the spoken and sacramental Word with a lightness of touch and a smile.

Children are equally welcome to stay in church during the service or go to the Meeting Room for Sunday School and everyone is particularly invited to stay together during our monthly 'Whole Church' services.

We predominantly use the 1982 Liturgy on Sunday mornings but create experimental devotion for special events throughout the year. If you would like to give us a try, we look forward to meeting and greeting you and hope that you might enjoy becoming part of this faithful family of Christ.

Mondays and Wednesdays

8am Morning Prayer, said quietly in the side chapel. All very welcome.

Wednesdays

(except 3rd week) 2.30pm Midweek Holy Communion.

(3rd Wednesday) 12.30pm Lunch, Meditative Reflection and Holy Communion.

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Communion.

Thursdays

3.30pm – 4.30pm The Rector is in the Church Office (in the old black tin hall) if you would like to see a member of the clergy for any reason.

Services and Events in October:

Sunday 4th: Harvest Festival Pentecost 20 (PROPER 27)

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist

4:00pm Pet Service

Sunday 11th: Pentecost 21 (PROPER 28)

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Whole Church Sung Eucharist

Sunday 18th: St Luke

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 21st:

8.30pm Said Compline

Sunday 25th: Pentecost 23 (PROPER 30)

8.30am Holy Communion

11am Sung Eucharist

Dates for your diary

Pat Payne has asked me to remind you all that the 3rd Sunday of every month is a Fair Trade Sunday when a selection of Fair trade goods will be available to buy in the meeting room.

In conversation with Robert Walker

The Rector's Chat with Robert Walker, Sunday 19th July - Transcribed as remembered

Q1 How has your journey of faith been shaped?

My family came to Kinross and St Paul's in the mid-1980s, where I've twice been Vestry Secretary and helped in other ways. I had returned to Christianity in my early twenties, and was fortunate that the grey service book, the blue book's forerunner, had just been introduced. Using everyday language it made worship meaningful. That convinced me that the church should be accessible in every way to people.

Let us start with external credibility. Non-believers live in a modern world. Many want rational answers to their questions about our faith, which as grown-ups they deserve. We ought to admit the Bible contains myths and seemingly implausible elements such as the Garden of Eden and a 900 year old Methuselah. Does that matter? Not really with logical explanations. The Old Testament originated from an oral, story-telling tradition, sections of it written by two writers, hence the repetitive and differing accounts, just as the Gospels vary. After all, witness statements in court always capture different parts of the same overall story.

Such an approach does not, I consider, threaten my Christian beliefs. With an archaeologist brother who investigates prehistoric artefacts and remains, I

cannot accept the creation story. But what was once heresy can become orthodoxy later - remember Galileo who argued that the Earth orbited the sun, in direct opposition to the official church teaching of the time

Is our religious imagery a barrier to non-believers? For example, God in Heaven above serves as a conveniently vague, Sunday School description of the unknowable. But man-made flight has shown that God does not sit on the clouds nor even in the stratosphere and beyond, as former bishop Richard Holloway once pointed out. Where that understanding takes us, time prevents me from pursuing, except to say that theologians have been exploring the question for over half-a-century.

For an Old Testament study course of the Rev. Ian Watt (past Rector of St Paul's), I bought a textbook that revealed more of the surprisingly simple story, of one nation, Judaea, who sought a monotheistic god. Its people's faith based on belief was rewarded with justice or vengeance, as the case maybe.

The strict God of the Old Testament is not for me. As a Christian I opt for the New Testament God of love for all mankind, and by all mankind.

After removing the biblical and religious baggage my basic beliefs are i) in Ultimate Harmony, which we know as God, that is the essence of other global faiths, but ii) an important distinction for a Christian is that Jesus leads the way towards creating God's kingdom on earth, not in the future but here and now.

We all can, and do, experience God in different ways. I recall sitting waiting for communion, when I sensed being called to do something: what I didn't know. A few weeks later Bridget Lindsay tapped me on the shoulder and asked "would you be able to take some photos, please". These were to illustrate the comprehensive church recording being led by herself and Maggie Strang-Steel. Well, I can't sing, but I can take photographs. What option had I, but to use my talent!

Q2. From your professional background in town planning, what is this building's main selling point to Kinross?

From a town planning view our Victorian church deserves its B Listed Building status. Taking the photographs enhanced my appreciation of its architectural details and its artefacts, some rarely seen. Personally I find the building dark and rather gloomy. I wonder how "non-believers" react.

Heritage conservationists know preserving historic churches as built is difficult. Too many are not viable, at best only their original fabric can be kept. Some are sold for housing, while others have remained churches but adapted to serve the community.

The first such a renovation I saw was in the late 1970s at a wedding in Hampshire. An upper floor split a church horizontally where the window arches started. The new church was located there, so the walls were adequately high, and it was enclosed by the original large roof. With light-coloured wood and paintwork the overall effect was light and airy. For those interested, renovated churches now exist nearer to Kinross.

As Jon indicated the Vestry's renovation proposals mean a fairly large, multi-functional space will be available for different groups in the wider community. The venue will be not impersonal but a warm and welcoming place, being part of our church "home".

Q3. How might St Paul's vision for our responsibilities to the wider community be reshaped in the future by our church community and this building?

First, a church is its congregation, and we are strong. To follow Jesus is to reach out beyond our congregation to the wider community. We have a good, dedicated base to start from.

Second, working on my premise that churches should be accessible, the renovation proposals will create an opportunity for interacting with people. They will be coming to use the new space for their different activities, where we can tell them about our church building and our faith. Demonstrating our openness and inclusiveness in the fabric of this building will be a greater resource for our community and open us up to a more imaginative faith.

Furthermore some local people are in real need of the good news we have to offer them. The new space could be the means for us, as a church community, to help them individually. After all actions speak louder than words!

The communities within and without these walls should benefit from the changes. It is our greatest desire that however the practical plans develop, the space we end up with should bring us closer together as a congregation. Even stronger we will be more able to serve the local community.

From the Vestry

At this time of year Vestry starts to concern itself with two regular matters; the forthcoming AGM (Sunday December 6th) and the membership of next year's Vestry (there will be at least one vacancy). Of course we always need to discuss our finances and the projections for next year are not looking good so much time and effort is spent on this subject. There are initiatives already running to help our financial situation and time will tell if they are successful, we will keep you informed of any developments.

This year, in addition to the above we are also working to develop the "St Paul's Vision" and to this end we invited an architect who has considerable experience in the upgrading and modernisation of churches to hear and comment on our plans. He explained some of the options available to us and showed us examples of what has been achieved in other churches. A viewing of the inside of St Paul's prompted more discussion and the identification of further options. All agreed that there is still much to be decided and further discussions, involving a wider cross section of our membership will be required. A case of watch this space.

Finally, Vestry have started planning our worship for the period Harvest Festival through Advent to the Christmas celebrations.

St Paul's Prayer Group for Healing

This group has been re-established after a few years' break. Both spoken and silent prayers can be offered for individuals in need and perilous situations around the world. You can light a candle on the tealight stand by the Lectern and write a prayer on a 'leaf' to hang on our Prayer Tree. Anyone and everyone is warmly invited to the Church at 10am on the first Monday of the month. We look forward to seeing you then.

St Paul's visiting Team

A team of people have been gathered together to visit people who are unwell or frail, either at home or in hospital. Please let Sue Jones know (iandsjones@live.co.uk) if there is someone you know who would benefit from a friendly, pastoral visit.

This is by no means a closed group and other volunteers would be most welcome to join. *There would be an expectation of either renewing your 'Protection of Vulnerable Groups' membership for this particular role or joining the Scheme as a new member. Please speak to Christine Croft for more details.*

Sunday School

Birthday wishes to:

Finn Thompson who's birthday is on October 20th

And a happy birthday to any grownups who may be too shy to share their birthdays with us.

Thursday Morning Group

10am Tea and coffee for 10.30am start

St Paul's Meeting Room (apart from the last Thursday of the month)

It was with some trepidation that we began this Term's foray into the Old Testament world of Ezra and Nehemiah. However it has already created much food for thought within the group. We are becoming increasingly aware that, despite our significant differences of history and culture, there is much that the world in our times can still learn from our oppressed but feisty Jewish ancestors. Everyone is very welcome to join us for conversation, study and prayer.

200 Club draw

The winners of the September draw were

1 st prize	Peter Croft
2 nd prize	Jim Henry
3 rd prize	Mr J Rodger

Congratulations to all.

When your membership is due for renewal you will receive a renewal notice. Many thanks to those people who return their forms and cheques promptly, and if you haven't yet returned yours, could you please do so as soon as possible. There are still plenty of numbers left if anyone else would like to join the club

Church Flowers

The Flower Diary is at the back of church if you want to give flowers on a certain Sunday.

Christina Rodger 01577 863785 or christina@westerloan.plus.com

A letter from the Calais refugee camp

This was sent to me from a Facebook friend with a request to inform people what things are really like in the refugee camps, I can think of no better way than simply re-printing the letter verbatim.

I went to Calais with no expectation. Full of fear that the atrocities I had seen in the media might be correct and that the people there were in fact the monsters that that have been portrayed. Was I self-entitled and feeling guilty? Perhaps. Was I scared that I was leading other people to believe that there were good people in the jungle and I might be wrong? Maybe. Was I full of hope that everything above would be overcome by the reality of the plight we would encounter? I hoped so.

My visit to 'The Jungle' in Calais - As we arrived on the dunes and saw the camp for the first time I couldn't help but feel shocked.... It is a vast expanse of tarpaulin and structures that are similar to slums. Shocking and disorganised to the naked eye. There was that fear again - 'Are we doing the right thing?' 'Have we made a massive mistake?'

Driving in didn't feel any better. We couldn't get hold of our contact and had nowhere to drop the thousands of pounds worth of goods we had received in donations from friends. There were Refugees surrounding our truck asking what we had and if we could give them any shoes or sleeping bags. I felt scared and unprepared.

As we were devising a plan, we saw a British lady walking around, not a care in the world, laughing and smiling - A sigh of relief.... We got out of the car and asked for some advice. 'Hi, I'm Liz! welcome! How are you? Where have you come from today?' Liz gave us the contact of a man named George, the head of a charity named 'Salam'. He and his wife Claudine have dedicated their retirement to helping the refugees coming in to the jungle and we were able to make an arrangement to meet them and drive to their deposit centre to drop our donations and make a plan for the next day.

Having slept and returning the next day we saw a very different picture.... The initial fear and anxiety we had ashamedly built from our own prejudice, melting away. As we drove down the very same road, smiling faces and greetings came from all around us. 'Hello! Welcome to our home!' again and again. Those same curious faces didn't seem so menacing after all, the menace was inside of us it would seem. We drove down to Salam to organise donations of food. Each bag receiving 4 cans of mixed food - tomatoes, tuna, beans, rice, tea, milk, salt, and other items. We made 500 bags in total (The jungle currently has over 3,500 Refugees) and around 500 loaves of bread (France have an incredible policy that

all food left from supermarkets must be donated to charity) There were two planned dropping points - The first in the Afghanistan part of camp and the second in the Sudanese part of the camp. As soon as we arrived we saw people sprinting from all directions, desperate to get one of the packages. It was chaotic, we were screaming these people in to a line so the van wasn't overcome. These people who have nothing. Proud people from their own countries. Doctors, electricians, carpenters all vying for the same goal - A meal. My heart broke as we drove away, hundreds of desperate faces looking back at us because they didn't run quite fast enough to make the drop off. Still waving and saying 'thank you'

The second drop was far more calm. A better established part of town. As a man ate a croissant he looked at me and said 'You have a kind heart. Thank you'

My heart broke again - I know nothing of kindness in comparison to his words. The compliment was all his.

Our next task was dinner service. The French Government supply 2,500 meals per day which equates to one meal for two thirds of the current inhabitants at the camp. I watched as at least 3,000 people queued at the singular dinner line from 1pm. Dinner starts at 5pm. Dinner was cous cous, sausages and veg served by us in tiny portions. Every single person I served at that dinner line was utterly grateful, chatty and smiling - regardless of the fact it was now hammering rain and they were soaked and starving. They all looked at me with the eyes of 'is that all!!' but not one of them questioned it unless in jest. They were just grateful. There was one man who really sticks in my mind - He was dignified and important, I could see that, yet here he was. He said thank you all the same but behind his eyes was devastation. Incomparable devastation.

Over the next two days we did more volunteer work. clearing litter in the camps, more distributions and sorting, Taking supplies to mothers/children and pregnant women, dinner services, first aid on the horrendous injuries we encountered - yet all of that pales in to insignificance in relation to the people;

There are things in that place that I have never been fortunate enough to encounter until now; Prevailing hope where all is lost, happiness in the face of aversion, a non-judgemental attitude even when pushed, a community spirit and pride in nothing and everything. Within the confines of what is seen to be chaos and destruction, there is order and peace. Several countries unifying as one, Mosques and churches in the same space, small restaurants and shops, architecture, a school and a library for the children. A neighbourhood of people searching for a better way of life because they were forced to flee from their own homes.

I spoke with just two people hoping to claim asylum in England, the others I spoke to were seeking asylum or were already in the process in other EU countries. Contrary to belief, the £39 per week benefit system in the UK isn't the driver for this community, the majority just want safety and a job. Asylum can take up to two years in any country with no work offered in the interim so the jungle is a place of safety whilst they wait. It is their home. their desperate and beautiful home. Interestingly, a person can't claim asylum in the UK, regardless of their status until they set foot in Dover..... That can only be achieved by committing a crime in itself.

The 8 year old girl who had known more pain than I could ever imagine - She taught me French whilst translating English to other children in her native language. She laughed and played with us like she didn't have a care in the world.

The man who I gave first aid to on a serious wound, who's family are in England because he made them safe first.

The pregnant woman who prayed that her family aren't dead.

The man walking home from the trains with 4 breaks in one leg because he lost all of his family in his country and wants to prove he can succeed in another.

I commend you.

I thought I knew pain, loss, fear, courage and appreciation. I know nothing in comparison to the people I met on our short stay to Calais.

The camp will be particularly needing volunteers over the winter. Do get in touch for details if you feel like you want to help.

xxx

We are now fundraising towards our second trip which will take place in November 2015. Please feel free to donate to the just giving page below and carry on sharing if this post resonates with you.

<https://crowdfunding.justgiving.com/calais-aid-run>

Kinross Refugee collection for CALAID

Kinross drop off point will be open 9am - 5pm at Webster Storage Limited 14 High Street, 7 days a week. Contact 0808 169 6100 for any further information or email us at bethechange@webstergiving.co.uk

REVISED LIST FROM CALAID EDINBURGH

NOT COLLECTING

- Women's and children's clothing
- Nappies, baby wipes and women's sanitary products
- Jumpers and sweaters
- Sheets and pillows
- Suits and formal shoes

CURRENTLY COLLECTING

- Large cardboard/plastic boxes, parcel tape, bin liners, labels and other items that can be used for packaging donations.
- Men's warm jackets and waterproofs size small-medium, underwear and socks. Men's belts and trousers and jeans size 28-32. The ratio of men to women in the camps is 10:1 and there are currently few children.

- Men's shoes size UK 7-9, EU size 41-43
- Men's gloves, scarves and hats.
- Tents, tarpaulins, sleeping bags, camp beds, sleeping mats, blankets and towels.
- Candles, matches, torches and batteries, wind-up torches, head torches or other equipment that can be used for light.
- Basic toiletries such as hand sanitiser, bars of soap, toothpaste, wash cloths, toothbrushes, tissues, razors and shaving foam.
- Vitamins, medicine and basic first aid supplies like plasters, bandages, antiseptic creams, over-the-counter painkillers and generic antibiotics.
- Dry, packaged and tinned food that is easily transportable and won't quickly expire. Pulses and grains such as lentils and rice are much appreciated, and products that do not contain gelatine or pork are important.
- Camping stoves, pots, pans and utensils.
- Smart phones with sim cards, and European adaptors.
- Books in varying languages, including French and English dictionaries and educational books.

Also, think about attaching notes, cards or letters to your donations, messages of hope and acceptance, reminders that there are people who care! Think of what many of these people are going through, and what comfort kind words and gestures can bring.

So please join, share and spread the message, because the more the merrier!

From Jim

Further to my article last month I came across an article printed in my newspaper, It was headed "I don't call jeans and flip-flops Sunday best". *(The article, which is too long to reproduce in its entirety, concerns the standard of dress exhibited by the members of an unknown church, probably in the London area. The service attended is a confirmation and a contrast in drawn between the white members of the confirmer's family, who were dressed very casually; jeans, tee shirts and anoraks, the other (white) members of the congregation; dressed equally casually, and the black congregants; ladies in frocks, some in hats as well, men in suits and ties – ED).* Do you have a view on acceptable standards of dress for church?

During the month I have had 4 deaths to deal with; a sister, a sister-in-law, a friend, and a cousin. These all took their toll so please remember me in your prayers. We lost Rae Black who was a member of St Paul's for many years, our prayers go to her family and her carer, Catherine. *(Does anyone have a photo and some life history of Rae, I would like to publish a memorial article in next month's magazine – ED)*

We are heading to the end of our church year, some of the Vestry will have completed their 4 year stint and fresh blood, so to speak, is always useful. Our thanks go to all on Vestry for the hard work they have done on our behalf.

Finally, what wonders a lick of paint has done for the church interior, it's now cleaner, brighter and much more inviting. What's next needing attention, think about it.

Jim

From the Editor

Jim's article last month (*and again this month*) struck a chord in my memory and after much searching I found this poem which I first read some years ago. It's a strange poem which for me works on many levels; is it just about what we wear in church, is it about death and meeting the Lord in the afterlife, and now re-reading the last verse, is it about the migrants and the abuse they have suffered and their decision to seek a new life in another country? I don't know, but here it is, maybe it stirs some thoughts in you:

What should I wear when I meet the Lord?
Will a sharp suit be right for his world?
Or some old dungarees, tattered and torn,
The clothes I have loved, the ones I have worn.
But is it really important, does he really care?
Surely He'll love me whatever I wear.

What should I say when He stands by my side?
Will He smile and greet me, His arms open wide?
Or should I greet Him, fondly, like some long lost friend
Whose journey though long has come to its end?
But is it important what I do on that day,
Surely He'll love me whatever I say?

What should I think when the Lord takes my hand?
And asks me to follow to a new promised land.
Or should I not worry what I might be losing
It's my life not His, but His is the choosing.
But is it important the way life unravels
Surely He'll be there for all of my travels.

Earlier in this edition of our magazine I reprinted an article describing life in one of the refugee camps near Calais, what sad difficult reading but without which we, and the rest of the world can have no idea of the life forced upon the refugees.

But already this article is out of date, daily we see the crisis worsening throughout Europe and the number of refugees increase to a level where countries have to say enough is enough and close their borders. So sad, doubly so because what help there is seems to be provided by ad hoc non-governmental groups, churches, charities and even ordinary people acting alone.

Where are the politicians? Politicians are the only ones who can solve this crisis, everyone else is simply plastering over the cracks that have appeared in our society. Day to day help is all well and good, it may be all that keeps the refugees alive, but the root cause of the problem lies with the warmongers in Syria and elsewhere.

The various middle-east wars of the late twentieth century were finally solved by what was called shuttle diplomacy. I think it was Henry Kissinger, there were no doubt others, who literally shuttled between the warring factions gradually eliminating areas of conflict until the two sides could be brought round a table to negotiate face to face. Where is the Henry Kissinger of to-day? Who, from among to-days politicians, will take on the task of negotiating a way out of the mess that is the middle east? Too many "Little Englanders" from throughout Europe, and not enough global statesmen and the world is the poorer for it.

And Finally

A boat was docked in a tiny Mexican fishing village.

A tourist complimented the local fishermen on the quality of their fish and... asked how long it took to catch them.

"Not very long" they answered in unison.

"Why didn't you stay out longer and catch more?"

The fishermen explained that their small catches were sufficient to meet their needs and those of their families.

"But what do you do with the rest of your time?"

"We sleep late, fish a little, play with our children, and take siestas with our wives. In the evenings, we go into the village to see our friends, have a few drinks, play the guitar, and sing a few songs. We have a full life."

The tourist interrupted, "I have an MBA from Harvard and I can help you! You should start by fishing longer every day. You can then sell the extra fish you catch. With the extra revenue, you can buy a bigger boat."

"And after that?"

"With the extra money the larger boat will bring, you can buy a second one and a third one and so on until you have an entire fleet of trawlers. Instead of selling your fish to a middle man, you can then negotiate directly with the processing plants and maybe even open your own plant. You can then leave this little village and move to Mexico City, Los Angeles, or even New York City!!! From there you can direct your huge new enterprise."

"How long would that take?"

"Twenty, perhaps twenty-five years." replied the tourist.

"And after that?"

"Afterwards? Well my friend, that's when it gets really interesting," answered the tourist, laughing. "When your business gets really big, you can start buying and selling stocks and make millions!"

"Millions? Really? And after that?" asked the fishermen.

"After that you'll be able to retire, live in a tiny village near the coast, sleep late, play with your children, catch a few fish, take a siesta with your wife and spend your evenings drinking and enjoying your friends."

"With all due respect sir, but that's exactly what we are doing now. So what's the point wasting twenty-five years?" asked the Mexicans.

And the moral of this story is:

Know where you're going in life, you may already be there! Many times in life, money is not everything.

"Live your life before life becomes lifeless"

For November

Next Magazine is the November/December issue, the cut-off date is week commencing 18th October, absolute and final cut off is 25th October. Please don't leave your submissions to the last moment, getting the magazine produced, printed, and distributed is always a hectic process and last minute submissions run the risk of being omitted if we are to meet our print deadlines.

Comments, articles or suggestions for future magazine editions are always welcome, please speak to me in church or e-mail them to me at jonsearle@btinternet.com