

First Presbyterian News



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Pastor's Column

The Heart of Christianity

October is a month of changes as leaves turn color and begin to fall, the days shorten and the weather gets chillier and chillier. Perhaps because of all those changes, October is also a month of traditions — ones that often go to the heart of what it means to be a Christian.

The month begins with a commemoration of World Communion Sunday, when we celebrate our connections with believers from all times and in all places, united by our belief in Jesus and by sharing the Lord's Supper.

Similarly, we remember our loved ones who have died and gone on to live with Christ during our annual Memorial Sunday service, which will be held October 30th this year. It is a way to honor them, but also to remind ourselves that, although they are gone from this world, they remain alive in Christ and we will be reunited with them some day in a joyous homecoming in the direct presence of God.

The Church Life Committee has been inspired by the lessening of the Covid-19 pandemic and has a special potluck planned for October 16th. They will provide brats and buns and invite attendees to bring side dishes to share that will compliment that. And what could be more Christian than a church potluck?

Finally, we will begin our annual stewardship campaign on October 23rd. That's when we ask each of us to pledge toward next year's budget, of course, but more importantly to think about how our use of money — both what we donate and what we keep — serves as an expression of our Christian faith.

Here's what that the Stewardship Committee of the Lutheran Church of the Atonement in Barrington, Illinois says about what our generosity says about our beliefs:

"If we give what's left over, the church neither feeds us spiritually, or anyone else. If we give 'dues' the church will be no more than a club to us. If sentimental preservation of the past is our reason, then the church will be like a museum. If we give the same as we always have, we can only expect declining returns. If we give only because we feel responsible, the church will be a heavy burden.

"If we give out of compassion for those whose needs are greater than our own, our needs will seem so much smaller.

"If we are thankful the church will reflect the measure of our gratitude.

"If love leads us in selfless giving, the church may well become the place where we discover the joy of Christ's presence."

Upcoming Events in October

World Communion Sunday

World Communion Sunday is an annual celebration of the connections in Christ with all believers in every nation on earth and in every time frame. It is always commemorated on the first Sunday of October and, in the Presbyterian Church (USA), also it includes the receiving of the Peace & Global Witness special offering, which the denomination describes this way: "A gift to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Individual congregations are encouraged to utilize up to 25% of this Offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. Mid councils retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own, through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness."

Celebration of Life for Jim Post

The friends and family of the late Jim Post will host a celebration of life at Turner Hall on Monday, October 10 at 2 p.m.

Brat Potluck

On October 16th, Church Life Committee will host a potluck. They will provide brats, buns and relishes. The congregation is asked to provide side dishes to share.

Memorial Sunday

Each year on the Sunday closest to All Saints Day, our congregation has a special memorial service to honor our loved ones who have left us to join the "Church Triumphant." Everyone will be given a chance to light one or more candles while we read the names of loved ones whose memory we want to honor.

October Lectionary

10/2: Lamentations 1:1-6
Psalm 137:1-9
2 Timothy 1:1-14
Luke 17:5-10

10/9: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7
Psalm 66:1-12
2 Timothy 2:8-15
Luke 17:11-19

10/16: Jeremiah 31:27-34
Psalm 119:97-104
2 Timothy 3:14-4:5
Luke 18:1-8

10/23: Joel 2:23-32
Psalm 65
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18
Luke 18:9-14

10/30: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4
Psalm 119:137-144
2 Thes. 1:1-4, 11-12
Luke 19:1-10

News of the Family

Cathy Harms and Emily Painter appeared in a *Gazette* photo advertising their performances in a production of Women of Courage and Commitment. Emily played Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt and Cathy played Grace Coolidge, wife of President Calvin Coolidge. Also an ad for fall/winter edition of *The Galenian* mentioned that it contains an article about Emily. That article, entitled "Emily Painter: A Painter of characters," reviewed her lengthy theater career. The article included the following sentence: "She's entertained audiences as a pioneer woman, an elephant driver, a drunk, a seamstress and a dog." For some reason no mention was made of her theatrical triumphs in numerous First Presbyterian Church video and stage productions!

The previous page in *The Galenian* had an article about theater productions in the Galena Center for the Arts. That article featured a photo that included Cathy Harms in a performance of "Romance in D."

The "From the Pages of the Galena Gazette" column noted that 10 year ago (the August 29, 2012 edition) reported about a trip to Portugal, Spain and Morocco which was led by Ron and Kathy Pearson and included seven Galena High School students.

A photo essay of the Galena Center for the Arts Annual Garden Party featured a photo of Dan and Cathy Harms.

Jerry Howard, senior vice president for the 13th District of the American Legion, was shown in a *Gazette* photo presenting a certificate of achievement to the local American Legion Post.

World Communion Sunday

World Communion Sunday had its origin in the heart of the Depression when everyday life was an ongoing struggle for survival and the world was gearing up for what would prove to be the unprecedented violence of World War II.

Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr, pastor of Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, felt that even in those extreme times, a sense of hope could be found in the unity Christ brings to all believers.

His idea spread slowly at first, but blossomed during the sacrifices of the war when it began to be promoted around the globe by the the organization now known as the National Council of Churches.

World Communion Sunday is now celebrated on the first Sunday of every October (Oct 2nd this year).

World Communion

Sunday story: Table Manners

Today we gather at the Table of the Lord with Christians far and near, Christians who have gone before us, and Christians who are yet to come. And when we gather here, listening to the Scriptures that we have just read, I feel the need to ask the question: How have we honored the One who has set this table for us?

Jesus tells a story about those who have benefited from the landlord's creation of a fine vineyard. But when the landlord sends for his portion, the servants are beaten and abused. The son is killed. The tenants have forgotten to whom the vineyard truly belongs. They seem to think it's theirs. Or should be.

How often have we in the church been just the same. We call this OUR Church, we talk about OUR budget, what we will do with OUR resources. I use that language as much as anybody. But we have to be careful to remember, don't we, that this is GOD'S house, these are God's tithes and offerings, certainly far less than is due to the One who gave everything for us. Not only this house, but we ourselves, belong to God. God gathers us here. God has laid before us this table, the gifts of God for the people of God. God has given to us the material blessings we have. God has given to us the gift of abundant life, both here and now and someday in eternity.

In return, God asks that we run the race set before us, that we live the life to which we are called. The ten commandments that we have read [...] are the blueprint given to God's people for building a community of faith. A community that would honor

God and each other. Honor God alone, remember the Sabbath, honor your mother and father, don't steal. Don't commit adultery. Don't live in constant longing for things others have. These rules are given for our good, as a blessing.

And yet even God's good gift of the Law was and is perverted by those who want to use it as a symbol of their own self-righteousness. I have kept every commandment from my youth, says Paul. I was the best of the best. Clean. Blameless. Not like other poor, dirty slobs. But now I count all that as trash, next to knowing the love of God in Christ. In Christ, we have not external rules, but the very LOVE OF GOD set loose in us and among us to change us from the inside out.

"Love one another as I have loved you," says Jesus. That's all.

Here at this table, on this Worldwide Communion Sunday, we bear witness to the love that makes us one. One with Christ, One with each other, one through all the world.

I remember gathering at the family table when I was young. These gatherings happened at our house, because it was the biggest. The kids would be outside, playing, fighting, laughing, crying. All those things that sisters and brothers and cousins do. The aunts and uncles would be milling about the living room, talking. Downstairs some were playing pinochle and pitch. Everyone waiting in anticipation for that glorious moment when the maker of the feast, my mother, would call out, "Come to the table, it's dinner time." And we would all come in, the kids running as fast as we could.

We'd be stopped at the door. "Settle down, now, it's dinner time."

Crazy Uncle Wayne that nobody was quite comfortable with would come to the table. Sarah and Diane, who had battle after battle over whose kids got the most attention from Grandma, and whose kids were spoiled brats, came to the table and smiled at each other, determined to let it all go, at least for the duration of the meal. Timmy and Andy, who had been scuffling in the dirt, over possession of a particular football, came laughing to the table together, and got sent to wash up. Grandpa, that was Great-Grandpa to many there, was seated at the head of the table, exempt from going through the line. We'd bring him his plate. Cousins who were living out of town and far away would be welcomed back into the fold. Even Cousin Louise's boy Rich who had been in so much trouble, and no wonder with the black clothes and the ear ring. He probably did drugs. But here he was, and we made him welcome. It was the family table.

As we gathered, we sang praise to God, and we thanked the one who had set the table for us. And together, we feasted and fellowshiped. No one left the table hungry, and no one was left out. Unless they chose not to come. At the table, we all treated each other with grace and dignity. There was no fighting, no belching, no throwing of food. The one who set the table before us would never allow for that. Neither did anyone have less than they needed. All that wonderful turkey and pie and mashed potatoes and dressing and homegrown frozen corn and bread and fruit. It was always enough. It was enough to send home leftovers with the cousins who didn't have quite so much. It was enough to

send an extra piece of pecan pie home with Uncle Paul because he loved it so. And we still had so much left over that it made an enormous pot of soup that we would eat for the next week. It was a celebration of love and abundance and blessing.

Come to the table, now. It's dinner time. And in God's family there is room for all, enough for all. We set aside our differences, we let the fights and the hurts and the wrongs fall away. We push none aside. Here, we are God's people. A family. And at this table, there is abundant blessing for all. The near, the far, those who are running the race well, those who seem to have lost the path, the young, the old, the saints who have gone before. We come, sharing in the blessings our God puts before us. It's dinner time. And may we one day be in the world what we are at this table. A family. Amen.

by Sharon Treloar

Thank you Letters

Dear Mission Committee,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff, and Consumers of The Workshop, we would like to thank you for your generous donation of \$550.00! We appreciate your support. Be assured this gift will be used to benefit the individuals that we serve in Jo Daviess County.

Sincerely, Alyssa Havens,
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I would like to take this time to thank you for your thoughtful donation of \$550.00 (Check #11933). We are so honored to accept this donation on your behalf. We truly appreciate your support of

Tyler's Justice Center for Children, especially during this time of crisis.

Because of the specialized services we offer at Tyler's Justice Center, we are able to help the voices of children who are victims of sexual and serious physical abuse to be heard. We are also able to help that child's family find their footing in a situation that many never thought they would be in. However, we would not be able to provide any of these services (free of charge) to such a vulnerable population of victims and their families, if it wasn't for the extraordinary community support by people like you. Your donation will be used to purchase necessary program supplies and materials, and will go directly towards assisting children and families in our community.

Again, I would like to say thank you for your amazing contribution. We are so grateful for your kindness, and you are so appreciated. Thank you for thinking of Tyler's Justice Center for Children.

With Sincere Gratitude,
Missy Lyons, Executive Director,
Tyler's Justice Center for Children

All the Milk She Has

As we turn our thoughts to stewardship, let me begin with a story told by that great general of World War II, who later became President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower. It's about his boyhood days on a Kansas farm.

"An old farmer had a cow we wanted to buy," the President said. "We went over to visit him and asked about the cow's pedigree." "Don't know," replied the farmer.

"Well, how's her butterfat production?" we asked.



"Don't know."

"Let's see," my dad finally said. "How many pounds of milk does she give each year?" "Don't know that either," said the farmer shaking his head. "But I do know she's an honest cow and she'll give you all the milk she has!"

"Well," Ike concluded. "I'm kinda like that old cow. You can always depend on me to give you everything I have."

Isn't it a comfort to know there's someone who will give you everything he has? Someone so reliable, so trustworthy, someone so dependable that every promise is unfailingly delivered? Someone like Jesus?

That's why he said, "Put your trust in the light while you have it," while you have the opportunity. The apostle Paul said further that "it is required, that those who have been given a trust [you and me] must prove to be faithful."

This is a special time in the life of our church. A special time because it is an opportunity for you to reaffirm your belief, to "put your trust in the light." A time to prove yourself faithful to him who gave you everything to guarantee you the assurance of everlasting life.

Steadfast in trust, faithful in love. That's the high calling of stewardship.

Bethel UpBeat, Bethel
Presbyterian Church, Waterloo, Iowa

Voice of the Martyrs: The “At Any Cost” Mindset

The first step in preparing for persecution is identifying the things we will do at any cost. We will read God’s Word, pray, worship, gather with other believers and witness for Christ, and nothing will stop us from doing these things with willing and glad hearts. Because we do these things in obedience to the commands of our Lord, their worth is beyond evaluation. The value of everything else in this world pales in comparison, including our very lives.

When I talk with Christians here in the U.S. and in other free countries, the word that constantly comes to mind is unprepared. Persecuted Christians in restricted nations have counted the cost and considered Christ worthy, so they prayerfully approach each day with an obey-at-any-cost mindset. Anchored by an understanding of God’s greatness and with their desires fixed on His eternal kingdom, they approach life differently from most Christians in free nations. Too many Christians in free nations live in fear

of those who oppose us while worrying about losing the things of this world.

For decades, our Chinese Christian family members have boldly, lovingly and humbly obeyed Christ, no matter how their government opposed them. When their gatherings were made illegal, they held church services anywhere necessary to avoid the secret police. And they also prepared for the inevitable arrests so that when pastors were imprisoned, others in the congregation were ready to take their place. Meanwhile, the imprisoned pastors embraced their time in jail as a new ministry assignment from the Lord: They simply continued their work.

Today, the Chinese Communist Party has arrayed a horrifying technological apparatus against Christians. Hundreds of millions of facial recognition cameras help track believers’ whereabouts and create a digital record used to punish them for their so-called disloyal and illegal activities. Their response to this heightened surveillance has been the same as their response to previous threats and attacks. They simply

continue in obedience with joyful hearts, having counted the cost and considered Christ worthy of any price they must pay. Are we, our families and our churches ready to respond to opposition in a likewise manner? If not, then we are not prepared for persecution.

My Giving

WHEN I GIVE NOTHING: I cast a vote to close the church.

WHEN I GIVE LESS THAN LAST YEAR: I have experienced a decrease in income, or I have changed my priorities, or I question the need for the work the church is doing.

WHEN I GIVE LESS THAN ONE-TENTH OF MY INCOME: I do less than what was required of the poorest Jew.

WHEN I GIVE GRUDGINGLY: I find no joy in my giving. I am a disappointment to the Lord, for God loves a cheerful giver. (II Corinthians 9:7)

WHEN I REFUSE TO PLAN MY GIVING IN ADVANCE: I fail to follow God’s plan. (II Corinthians 9:7)

WHEN I GIVE WEEKLY: I help fulfill the planned programs of the church. I make it much easier for myself by avoiding the accumulation of my stewardship obligation. I find joy and satisfaction in my giving. I follow the God-given plan. (I Corinthians 16:2)

WHEN I GIVE PROPORTIONATELY: I shall be blessed in my giving and will be enriched in every way. (II Corinthians 9:11) I shall increase my gifts as my income increases.

The Good News. First Presbyterian Church, Greene, Iowa



Fifth Mark of a Vital Congregation

Spirit-inspired worship vs. self-gratifying worship; stale ritual divorced of meaning; or consumer entertainment worship

Spirit-inspired worship is a gift of God's wonder! Six days we labor and toil, and on this Holy Sabbath day we get to come into the presence of God; we get to encounter the awesome mystery of the God who longs to be known in relationship with us. We worship, because through prayer and supplication, through the Word proclaimed and the sacraments celebrated, through the songs of praise and passing of peace — God meets us there, Worship is our lifeline to the Holy God. Our worship should be active participation into the living relationship with the triune God; thus, all should feel welcome and have a place. Worship should challenge, teach, transform, convict, and call us into deeper relationship with God and one another, not gratify our comforts and entertain our desires. Worship is an encounter with God that we understand and do not understand. It is an act filled with mystery and awe, but in worship we have the opportunity to express our deepest desires to God and listen for God's voice. In worship, we also experience the call to serve and be in mission.

A. Biblical References:

Isaiah 6:1-13; Isaiah 29:13;
Hebrews 12:28-29, Luke 24:13-35;
Exodus 3:1-6; Deuteronomy 12;
Philippians 2:1-11, Hebrews 5:1-10;
1 Chronicles 16:7-36; Revelation
22:1-7, Matthew 21:12-17

B. Objectives:

- Prayerful discernment of members actively participating in

all aspects of planning and leading worship

- There is thoughtful and sound biblical preaching
- Intentional worship does not cling to rituals, but is open to filling sacred space with new rituals Engages all people, of all diversity, and enables them to be active participants in the experience
- Creates space for peoples' stories; not afraid of silence
- Communal connectivity to one another, and connection to God



- Challenges and sends the people of God beyond their pew into daily life
- There should be awe, expectation, and anticipation in coming into the presence of God

C. Potential Outcomes:

- Worship helps people deepen their relationship with God and nurtures faith
- Worship strengthens our communal ties as stories are shared and we intimately experience God
- Worship becomes an expression of relationships to God and to the household of God
- Worship opens us to experience the wonder God longs to reveal and wonder transforms our lives and ministry, never leaving us the same, but leading us to even deeper questions

- Worship enlivens us, emboldens us to be a people of God in our communities and our world
- Blessing of rich diversity as people share new rituals, traditions, ways of interpreting which challenge and enrich our wisdom in faith

D. Reflection Questions:

- What would you say are the fundamental principles to why you gather for worship?
- What would a visitor say about your worship?
- How does your congregation practice spirit-inspired worship — allowing space for lament, praise, confession, questions, wrestling contemplation with the Word?
- Is worship collaborative in your church? Are people of all ages/backgrounds included?
- Does your congregation explain, teach and educate people on the rituals and traditions?
- How does your worship challenge, ignite, educate and transform people?
- Does worship meet people where they are and allow for active participation? How do people share their stories?
- Name times when God's wonder was experienced in worship.
- How open is your congregation to change in worship? Do they seek new ways to ritualize the sacredness of worship, or do they hold on sacredly to their rituals and traditions?
- Do all cultures, races, languages, genders, ages, all diversity mind a sacred place to worship? Is worship enriched by their unique traditions and styles?

The Pumpkin Growing Competition

There was once a village where lots of people liked growing things. In the centre of the village were some fine allotments on a sunny slope. At the top of the allotments were three plots next to each other owned by three sisters. Now I'd like to tell you that they all got along well, and most of the time they did, except when it came to growing pumpkins. Beans and potatoes and cabbages and lettuces and asparagus — they could grow these and share them without any argument at all, helping each other out, but when it came to growing pumpkins that was another matter. Pumpkins just seemed to bring out their competitive streak. Every year there would be arguments about whose was the biggest and best pumpkin. Sometimes it got quite nasty and they didn't talk to one another for weeks!

Eventually the head of the allotment society — a wise man — decided that this wouldn't do at all. "I've decided," he said to the three sisters, "that this year we will have a pumpkin growing competition. We will see who is best at growing pumpkins. I will be the judge, and I will give the prizes when I have decided who the best pumpkin grower is."

The three sisters got to work. They sowed the seeds. The pumpkin plants started to grow. They watered them. They fed them. The plants put out leaves and flowers. The tiny pumpkins started to form. They watered and fed some more. They watched anxiously as their pumpkins started to swell. As the summer wore on the competition [heated] up.

Which one would win the competition?

Harvest time came. The pumpkins were ripe. And it was clear to the sisters which one of them would win. The first sister's pumpkin was huge — far bigger than the other two. The middle sister had grown a big pumpkin, a fine pumpkin, but it was nothing like as big. And the third sister's pumpkin, though still very impressive, was quite a bit smaller. The three sisters harvested their pumpkins and brought them to the head of the allotment society. "Here we are" they said. "Ready for you to judge who has won." "Well" he said, "they are very fine pumpkins." He measured them and weighed them and took some photographs. "Very fine pumpkins indeed, but actually I'm not quite ready to decide which is the best yet. Take them away and do what you want with them — I have all the measurements, I've taken some photographs — and I will think about it and let you know." The three sisters were very puzzled. It was

obvious to them who had won. But they took the pumpkins away and waited. But what were they going to do with the pumpkins now, while they waited for the official announcement?

The first sister took her huge pumpkin home in her wheelbarrow. She could hardly carry it. She knew she was going to win. It was obvious. She started to dream about what it would be like when she won. Everyone in the village would want to come and see her prize-winning pumpkin. She imagined herself showing it to them. But where would she put it? How would she display it? Surely such a marvelous pumpkin deserved a really special showcase. So she built a fine wooden case, and made a wonderful velvet pillow for the pumpkin to sit on and everyday she polished the pumpkin so that when the day came she would be ready to show it off. What she didn't know — and you may not either — is that sometimes although a pumpkin can look fine on the outside, in the



middle it can be rotting away, fermenting and producing gas, just like a fizzy drink. Inside the pumpkin the pressure had been building up for weeks. One morning she reached out to polish the pumpkin and as soon as she touched it — boom — the whole thing exploded. Slimy rotten pumpkin everywhere.

The second sister, when she heard this had happened, felt a bit smug I'm afraid. What a waste of a pumpkin, she thought. It serves her right. Pumpkins aren't for exhibiting, they are for eating, so that's what I'm going to do. I love pumpkin, and now I've got this huge one, all for me!

So that evening, she cut a big slice of pumpkin and roasted it in chunks, with her dinner. Delicious. But it was a big pumpkin — there was an awful lot left. What was she going to do? She could share it — but why should she — it was her pumpkin; if other people wanted a pumpkin they could grow their own.

No, she would eat it all herself. She had baked pumpkin, boiled pumpkin, fried pumpkin, pumpkin pie, pumpkin cake, curried pumpkin,

stewed pumpkin, pumpkin fricassee, pumpkin pizza, pumpkin on toast, pumpkin for breakfast, for lunch, for tea. She ate pumpkin in every way you could think of, and perhaps some you'd rather not. She ate it faster and faster, ever more desperately. She didn't want her pumpkin going rotten before she'd finished it. But let's face it, there's only so much pumpkin one person can eat.

Soon, although she hated to admit it, she was absolutely fed up with pumpkin. She was seeing pumpkins in her dreams, chasing her along the road. Finally there came the day when she took one look at the pumpkin flakes she was eating for breakfast — that's like cornflakes only made out of pumpkin — and her stomach just turned over at the thought. I won't tell you what happened next, but suffice it to say that she was very, very ill.

Meanwhile the third sister had taken her pumpkin home with her, just like the other two, and just like them, she wondered what to do with it. She knew it wasn't the biggest, but it was still a fine pumpkin, a tasty looking pumpkin. It was far too big for her. She thought and she thought, and then she came up with an idea. The next morning the village woke up to find posters all over the place. "Come to my pumpkin party! Today! All Welcome!"

No one was quite sure what a pumpkin party was, but it sounded interesting. So at the appointed time, they all turned up.

"What's a pumpkin party?" They all asked. "This is!" said the third sister, and she showed them into the dining room — "help yourself!" and there was the table groaning under the weight of a big pot of

pumpkin soup and a splendid pumpkin pie. "There's plenty for everyone," she said — "you can take some home to share if you can't eat it all." And that's how it was. Everyone ate and drank and laughed and strangers who'd never spoken a word to one another became the best of friends.

And just at that moment the head of the allotment society came around. "Now I'm ready to give my prize," he said, "for the very best pumpkin grower." And who do you think won it?

It's a daft story — of course it is. But it's not so daft that we can't see the ourselves in it. Often we use our possessions as ways of impressing others, like the first sister, or we hoard them all for ourselves, like the second. In the end, the Bible says, neither is the way to real happiness. The good things God has given us are ours to share — that way they aren't just possessions — gadgets, houses, toys, pumpkins — but ways of creating love, bringing us together.

Perhaps this year, [...] we might like to think about what the pumpkins in our lives are. What are the things we have which we could share, but sometimes find it hard to? The things we use to impress others, the things we hoard for ourselves because we feel we are entitled to them? Patrick said to me yesterday, (and he didn't know what this story was going to be about) that this pumpkin, though huge, is perfectly edible. "If someone brought a big bread knife, people could take a slice home." He said. So that's what we'll do after the service — slice it up so we can have our very own pumpkin party. Amen.

Anne Le Bas





Stewardship

The following quote comes from *Only One Way Left* by George MacLeod, written in 1956, more recently reissued by The Iona Community and edited slightly for gender inclusivity

“Here speaks, first of all, the Church in one of its great days. Pope Gregory the Great, not a lunatic fringe man, but the instigator of the conversion of England, could write thus: ‘We must make [everyone] clearly understand that the land that

yields [...] income is the common property of all [people] and its fruits for the common welfare. It is therefore absurd for people to think they are not robbers when they do not pass on what they have received to their neighbors.

‘Absurd! Because almost as many folk die daily as there are rations locked up for use at home.

‘Really when we administer any necessities to the poor, we give them their own. We do not bestow our goods upon them, we do not fulfill

the works of mercy. We discharge the debt of justice.

‘What was given by a common God is only justly used when those who have received it use it in a common good.’

Such was the kidney of Gregory the Great: not a Dean of Canterbury but the instructor of Augustine, the first of that See. Such was the way the Church was expected to speak in his day.”

George MacLeod