

## FELLOWSHIP OF ST THOMAS.

### IMPORTANT UPDATE from the President, Matthew S Bicket.

Greetings and good wishes (somewhat belated!) for 2020. We had another enjoyable Annual Gathering in Dunblane last September, and a lovely lunch in the India Gate Restaurant. Rev Paul Watson who had worked in Sri Lanka and who also had links with Bangladesh and India led the Eucharist using a Sri Lankan liturgy and Rev John Purves preached. He had been minister of St Andrew's Colombo at the time of Tsunami and also spoke about the Easter Day terrorist attack. Paul and John helped to make the service very moving and meaningful. In the afternoon, Sandy Sneddon, Asia Secretary of World Mission Council gave an excellent update of the work of the Council. This was before major restructuring of Church Committees took place and we remember all the staff in the offices facing uncertainty about the future.

Here now is the important update following the AGM and our February Committee meeting. At the AGM it was decided that **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2020** in Dunblane would be the final annual celebration. We have struggled for a number of years to attract people to the committee and to become members, partly due to the increasing age of members but also because so few people are being sent to work in the areas covered by The Fellowship of St Thomas. More details will follow, but Very Rev John Chalmers has accepted our invitation to lead the Communion Service. John is well known and recently he has been acting as Convener of the World Mission Council.

At our recent Committee meeting we decided we wanted to ask for your help in the afternoon session at the Annual Gathering. We want us all to share our stories (briefly!). If you have one **short** (!) story you are willing to share, we would like to hear it. Whether you are unable to come or not, please send your story to my email address below (we suggest no more than 500 words, shorter if possible!)

If you have a photo you would wish to share, send a scanned copy to me by email with a brief description of date and place and we will attempt to make a PowerPoint presentation for the afternoon. The plan is that all stories and photos might be made into a booklet which would be available later, so that we have a record of experiences. ***Please do this as soon as possible so that we can start on the preparations.*** We also encourage you if you are comfortable in doing so, to come in local clothes from your time overseas and we will get a photo of the occasion for the archives.

I know how much The Fellowship of St Thomas has meant to many people across the years but the Committee felt, and those attending the AGM agreed, that it was better to have a special Annual Celebration with the accent on Celebration, rather than see a continuing decline. We look forward to sharing the day with as many of you as are able. We also know that you will continue to remember the Churches and peoples of the countries which are represented in The Fellowship of St Thomas.

Matthew S Bicket, 9/2 Connaught Place, Edinburgh EH6 4RQ. [matthew.bicket1952@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.bicket1952@gmail.com)