

## RE-POTTING!

As Soul Marks moves towards its seventh year we have increasingly felt the need to strengthen many of our structures. There has been much growth and plenty to give thanks for, but growth cannot take place without change, and over the last few months we have spent time looking at how best to enable, sustain and further the work we have been doing.

A group of 20 people met in June to share their stories, experiences and dreams for Soul Marks. It was a wonderful day of listening to one another, and to the Creator of all things! A small strategy group skilfully enabled by Debbie Bayne took forward the 'listening' from that day and have continued to meet and work hard, taking stock of our present situation and how best we can begin to mature as a trust.

Growing further afield Carol flew off to Vermont in July at the invitation of 'Old South Church,' Windsor, to share the work of Soul Marks, lead a workshop and facilitate the Sunday service. Their pastor Mandy was herself taking a sabbatical in Europe but caught up with Carol for four days in August. Mandy left saying 'I had hoped I would return with a few new art ideas to take to my congregation, but instead I am going away with a whole new way to approach worship.'

Back in Scotland Carol has spent September involved in planning workshops and worship for Harvest with Hamilton Presbytery and at St. James, Leith.

October sees Carol learning new computer skills to enable the creation of some Soul Marks resources. This along with a new computer, software and designated time in March 2010, has been funded by a generous grant from the Anchor Trust. Watch this space!



Last but far from least are goodbyes to Anne Butler and Angie Inchley who have recently stepped down as trustees. They have been with us from the beginning and cannot go without our heartfelt thanks – THANK YOU SO MUCH!

## HARVEST



*Above - Children painting for Harvest at St James, Leith.*

*Below - The Space and Worship Workshop, The Bield, Perth.*



## WORKSHOPS AT MOTHERWELL



During this past year North Motherwell Parish has been privileged to host 3 Soulmarks workshops, arranged by the Presbytery of Hamilton, on the themes of Advent, Lent & Harvest. Folks from many congregations attended, including some from our neighbouring Roman Catholic Church, St Bernadettes. To each of these events Carol brought along lots of inspirational & thought-provoking ideas and materials.

Following a gathering time with coffee, she sensitively introduced the theme for the day and led the group in a short, participative time of worship. It was interesting to see from the power point presentation how congregations of various traditions brought creativity to these seasons of the Christian year.....using all our senses & involving all ages.

The workshops were participative, though not daunting and friendships were formed as we worked together making stars, doves, palm trees and colourful recycled cardboard pulpit falls. After lunch, the second half of each day was spent in groups, reflecting on how seasonal worship might be creatively enriched.

Certainly, here in North Motherwell, we have been able to incorporate many of the ideas from these workshops into our services of worship during Advent, Lent & Harvest. Thank you to Carol & Soulmarks!

*Helen & Derek Pope*

I've been lucky to have attended 3 of Carol's workshops. At first I was attracted to the craft side of the workshop but I have found that I have received a lot of blessings from the worship as well.

The 3 workshops I attended were about Advent, Lent and Harvest Festival. They have given me new things to think about, especially the Lent one. Being brought up in quite a staid Church Of Scotland background, I had never given much thought to Lent and all it really meant, not just about what you gave up but what you were preparing for. To me Easter was all about what Christ gave up and what He done for us! This workshop gave me whole new insights into what was happening and

made my focus of Easter change slightly. We talked about throwing out the rubbish in our lives and coming to God cleansed anew for our next year of worship. To me that is a really exciting thought and one that will stay with me.

The use of Arts and crafts during worship is a great idea. It gets the congregation interested. They can become participants to the worship not just members of the audience. It brings ideas and conceptions to life. It makes people think outside their normal box and gives them new ideas, new ways to worship.

*Linda Walker, Motherwell North Parish Church*

Attending a Soul Marks workshop always gives me an opportunity to glimpse new possibilities for using visual arts in worship. It is a time for reflection, a chance to meet all sorts of people with their ideas and experiences of worship and church. It is an opportunity to try new things and to get messy, a time to think in different ways about worship space and a chance for good conversations and developing relationships.

I've attended three 'Art & Worship' workshops run by Hamilton Presbytery and Soul Marks over the last year, focusing on Advent, Lent and Harvest. The workshops encourage creativity, inspire ideas and help give participants confidence to try something in their own congregations.

These workshops have been the catalyst for 'Advent – leading us to the heart of Christmas' when we had hearts of all shapes and sizes, helping us in our worship through Advent to Epiphany and for mini labyrinth booklets which folk decorated and wrote in as part of our Holy Week services.

*Karen Harbison Hamilton:Trinity*



**To book a Resource Day Workshop  
for Advent, Lent/Easter,  
Pentecost or Harvest  
Contact [Carol@SoulMarks.co.uk](mailto:Carol@SoulMarks.co.uk)**

## WINDSOR, VERMONT, USA.

If you could just sit in our sanctuary and reflect on the history of prayer and worship that surrounds you, it can be very overwhelming. I search the architecture for clues from the past for creativity and am amazed at the carved wood and stained glass windows. Over the years as a member of Old South Church, I have done this many times. My reflections take me through the generations of community at this place and I wonder what gatherings, what goings on, bound members to one another in His name. These very activities weave a community, keep us connected and provide such a feeling of love that I know I am on the right path, and want to deepen my faith through creativity.

When Pastor Mandy revealed her plan for sabbatical, I was very excited for her. At the same time I felt that she would leave a big hole in our community for the four months she would be away. She needed a well deserved break. It was an opportunity for the congregation to reach out to one another, and maintain relationships in her absence.

Carol came to our church in the beginning of July 2009 and guided us through the creative process of prayer to make some visual art for our sanctuary. She has such wonderful, creative energy and it was exciting and inspiring to hear her thoughts on space, prayer, and worship. At this gathering, I saw people I hadn't connected with in a long time, we laughed, prayed, told stories and created some of the most beautiful inspiring pieces of art for our place of worship! This is what I had been searching for, this was community in 2009. This connected us and strengthened our faith community. Just look at the pictures of the sanctuary, bright, colourful, full of life! Thank you Carol!

*Sue Goulet, Old South Church, Windsor.VT.*

When one of the notable architectural features of your attractive New England town is the historic white clapboard church in its main street where you regularly worship, the idea that an unknown artist from Scotland was to be let loose in its orderly, traditional interior for a week during the pastor's absence might understandably cause some apprehension! However, as church members gathered to watch Carol's slides one evening and hear her talk about her work, you

could sense that her gentle and assured manner was allaying some of their anxieties and generating interest and anticipation among them.

The working group the next night brought together a dozen or so folk, some new to the church or perhaps feeling a little on the edge of things, and there was a buzz of activity and chatter as each realised they had something

unique to offer of themselves, their ideas and skills - and were having fun together in the process.

Creativity, involvement, and accessible ways of sharing life with God together are all things that Mandy, the pastor, has encouraged and demonstrated over the years, but now an ordinary, disparate group of people were owning and experiencing these things for themselves - and loving it.

They couldn't wait to see the reaction of the others on the Sunday morning to the colours and patterns in the sanctuary!

It felt as if they had discovered that all this was not just about "decorating" the building, but that there was something more significant about valuing and enjoying their individual creativity and using it to celebrate and enhance their life together as God's people, even if, as Carol's sermon that Sunday suggested, it sometimes means "stepping out of the boat". In accompanying Carol on this trip, it was a joy for me to witness something of this process, and to know that for some, like Sue, seeds had been planted which would continue to grow in their own lives and in the life of Old South Church.

*Angie Inchley*



### HELPING SOUL MARKS

If you would like to help further our work, you can do this by praying for us / sending a donation to

Soul Marks PO Box 23548  
Edinburgh EH6 4WS.

Please make cheques payable to 'Soul Marks'

## VERMONT TO EDINBURGH

When I made arrangements to meet and work with Carol Marples, I anticipated coming to Edinburgh for four days and then leaving with ten great craft ideas to share with my congregation.

Because Carol would have already visited Vermont and seen my church and worked with my people, I expected that she would lead me in directions uniquely suited to my church's historic space. But my vision was so limited.



More than ideas of what to do together, Carol opened my eyes and heart about how to work with my congregation. I did not return to Vermont, after my wonderful days with Carol, with specific patterns or projects in mind, rather I returned home with a whole new approach to ministry.

For years, I've been "surprising," my congregation with worship accents: grape vine wreaths, silk paintings, stones sculptures, candles, wall size Advent calendars, and such, but I had never planned with them for what direction we would take together.

Carol taught me that it is the communal process of determining what to highlight each liturgical season that is more important than what we come up with visually and tactically. Working together as the people of God, shaping our space and our message together, this is what will give us life and will truly enhance our worship and our witness.

As I prepare to return to ministry following my sabbatical I am eager to establish a worship group who will pray and study and laugh and wonder and create together so that our physical space might rightly show what our spirits already know, the grace and beauty of God's love. I am so grateful to Carol and to Soul Marks for this re-visioning of how to pastor for the long-haul. May God's grace sustain her important work so that others might have their vision of ministry enlarged and rejuvenated as well.

*Pastor Mandy Lape Freeberg*

### SOUL MARKS NEWSLETTER - SAVING TREES

Would like to receive your newsletter in colour as a PDF file?

If so please send your name and email address to [admin@soulmarks.co.uk](mailto:admin@soulmarks.co.uk), using the subject title 'Newsletter'.

We are still happy to continue sending newsletters by post for those who prefer it. Unfortunately due to finance we can only produce these in black and white.

## INSPIRATION FOR A MEMORY GARDEN

The workshop, given by Carol Marples of *Soul Marks* on 'Sacred Spaces in Hard Places', really gave us some good food for thought and helped set us off on a journey. Although we would dearly love to have a "quiet space" in the body of our church, we quickly realised this could not be achieved due to the number of children we have running around!! So we decided to make use of our grounds and make a 'Memory Garden'.

We are going to utilise ideas from the workshop in our Summer House which we want to use as our "quiet space". In the garden, we are putting in a water feature, and taking the idea from the workshop, we are going to get stones and anyone who gets baptised can have their name written on a stone and placed in the water feature which we will call the 'Water of Life'. I could go on, but I think you get the picture!

After some planning, we had a ceilidh to try to raise extra funds. We have now managed to get a start date for the work to commence on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May (fingers crossed), so let's pray the sun shines for us. Happily, we are also eligible to receive the £250 grant that the *priority areas committee* had announced to any 4 priority area congregations who were interested in working with *Soul Marks* in the 'Sacred Spaces...' workshops.

*John Purves, Eleanor Fraser  
Drumchapel St. Andrew's*

### DIARY UPDATE

#### 2009

- 21/11/09 Quiet Day, St Mary's, Dalmahoy
- 22/11/09 Advent Transformation  
St James, Leith
- 29/11/09 Memorial Service  
Sick Children's Hospital Edinburgh
- 05/12/09 Advent Art & Prayer Workshop Day  
Leith School of Art
- 07/12/09 Advent Art & Prayer Workshop Day  
Lochiehead
- 12/12/09 Advent Art & Prayer Workshop Day  
St James, Leith

#### 2010

- 18-20/01/10 World Missionary Conference 2010  
Planning Meetings
- 20/02/10 Lent Art & Prayer Workshop  
Leith School of Art
- 22/02/10 Lent Art & Prayer Workshop  
Lochiehead
- 29/4/10 Art & Worship Workshop, Cranhill
- 22/05/10 Spring Art & Prayer Workshop  
Leith School of Art
- 23/5/10 Pentecost Service, Cranhill
- 27/5/10 Art & Worship Workshop, Cranhill
- 2-6/07/10 World Missionary Conference 2010

*During 2009/2010 Carol will be working  
24 Days at St James, Leith*

For an constant update on the diary  
please refer to the web site diary page on  
[www.soulmarks.co.uk](http://www.soulmarks.co.uk)