I hope you were able to spend some time at the Churches Stand at this year’s Royal Highland Show. The programme addressed many concerns relating to rural Scotland such as Fracking, and Crofting, while visitors heard about the increasing interest in Pilgrimage. There is something for everyone at the Churches’ Stand. Laura and her team of face painters were in huge demand again while parents took advantage of some relaxation, enjoying a free cup of coffee and a chat. The success of the stand at the Show is largely due to a brilliant Planning Group and its team of dedicated volunteers. They do a magnificent job every year. This year was Convener Bill Harvey’s last year (pictured). He has been a regular at the show since it began in 1973 with the late Nina Dinnes. The Stand has grown since those days attracting a wide and diverse audience and is supported by many of the...
Church Leaders who visit together. This year the Churches Stand hosted the new Scottish Rural Parliament. ACTS Scottish Churches’ Rural Group are part of the Advisory Group to the rural parliament and bring many of the issues relating to Scottish rural life to their attention. There is such a lot of work happening in the churches in support of the communities in Scotland and their presence at the Show gives everyone an opportunity to meet the Group and tell them what you think is important to your rural community. If you were one of those visiting, thank you for your support. If not then why not drop in next year and catch up with all the news over a cup of coffee?

**Changes at Inglewood**

For the past 9 years, ACTS has been based at Forrester Lodge, visitors and groups have been able to enjoy the comfortable and elegant meeting rooms at Inglewood House. Inglewood House was once a Church of Scotland Care Home, and it was originally owned by the family of the Forrester-Paton’s, who although were mill owners, were very strongly connected to the United Free Church of Scotland. As is so very commonplace these days, such a large old building has been expensive to run and it was with some regret that Ceteris, the current owners and landlords of ACTS offices at Forrester Lodge have been forced to sell the property. This means that tenants including ACTS will not be able to use the rooms at Inglewood House for meetings, as the property will become a Hotel and Spa. Of course tenants are free to use the many other venues in Alloa and Stirling and there will be a small meeting space provided at Forrester Lodge itself, but we know many of our Group Members will miss coming along to Inglewood House. The change takes place at the end of August, and any meetings due to take place after those times have been moved to another venue. It is a sad reflection on the times we live in, and we wish the new occupants of Inglewood House, every success in their new venture.
Scottish Churches’
National Racial Justice Sunday Service 2014

The Scottish Churches are holding a Special Service in Pollokshields Parish Church, Glasgow, to mark Racial Justice Sunday – September 14th from 18.30. The event is open to all. Between 18.00 and 18.30 a choir drawn from members of the congregations of MECTIS (Minority Ethnic Christians Together in Scotland) will sing as the congregation gathers.

The Service will be led by Church Leaders; by members of MECTIS congregations; by members of the Scottish Churches’ Racial Justice Group; and by members of Pollokshields Parish Church. The focus will be on human trafficking as a racial justice issue. At the close of the Service, all members of the congregation will be invited to share in a light meal, prepared by members of MECTIS.

MPhil in Middle Eastern Studies
(Specialization: Muslim-Jewish Relations) – Applications for entry 2015 will open in September 2014.

The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (FAMES), University of Cambridge, is delighted to offer the MPhil in Middle Eastern Studies (Specialization: Muslim-Jewish Relations) for the 2015-16 academic year. Applicants will be required to apply to the University of Cambridge by the published application deadline. (Refer to the following websites: www.ames.cam.ac.uk/postgraduate/ and www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/gradadmissions/prospec/)

Applicants for this course are expected to have a university qualification in either Hebrew or Arabic.

For further information, contact Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner: emw36@cam.ac.uk
Art and Spirituality Course
Every Thursday 9.30 - 4.30

Tutor: Carol Marples

This course will explore the intersection of the material and the spiritual in visual art: earthly and heavenly; material and transcendent; ephemeral and permanent; presence and absence; liminality and crossing places. The visual arts and religion have had a long and at times turbulent history. This has been less so in recent times and yet there continues to be a constant search for a spiritual connection through art.

This course will draw on resources from the historic visual art of Western Christianity into the wider spiritual context of the contemporary world. Lectures to inform and stimulate practical work will be given at the beginning of each day, along with regular group discussion and seminars. The course will also draw on music, poetry, everyday objects and the natural world as a resource to stimulate creativity and reflection. Inspiration will be taken from a wide range of artists: from Giotto to Kandinsky, Mondrian to Beuys and contemporary artists such as Paul Thek, Tracey Emin and Ann Hamilton among others.

Structure
The course is a practical mixed media course, covering observational drawing, painting, mark-making, colour, creating textural surfaces and printmaking techniques, along with exploration of moods and emotions. As the course develops, students will be encouraged to experiment and push boundaries in a variety of art media. Through this, students will build up and develop a personal vocabulary and language of artistic articulation.

In the final term the students will continue to develop their own artistic voice creating a final piece of work (or series of works) for the end of year exhibition in June.

The course welcomes all ranges of experience, with a willingness to be both taught and to be open to experimentation. The course aims to hold the tension of being rooted in the traditional while being receptive to taking risks and playful exploration and reflection.

The course will be lead by Carol Marples BA (Hons), MLitt, PhD Candidate in Theology, Imagination and the Arts. Carol has been connected with LSA for over 20 years, teaching life drawing, children and young people’s workshops, art and prayer workshops, textile summer schools and occasional visiting tutor on the Foundation Course. She is also artist and visual development worker for the Soul Marks Trust.