

# Year of Homecoming



**Welcome from Rev Peter Gill** to our congregations for the Year of Homecoming 2009.

*‘You welcomed me as if I were an angel’*

*- A journey from Pakistan to Paisley.*

The Church of Scotland is an official partner of Homecoming Scotland, taking the text ‘You welcomed me as if I were an angel’ (Galatians 4:14) as its theme and I have decided to write my own story for the 2009 Annual Review a Homecoming theme, to connect 2009, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, has been designated Year of Homecoming by the Scottish Government. Church of Scotland is my spiritual home. I believe in Mission in reverse. Church of Scotland’s Missionaries went to Pakistan and my Dad came to know the Lord through a Scottish missionary. Church of Scotland is my mother church.

I am the first Pakistani Kirk minister to be trained and ordained and welcomed by a Scottish parish.

The Scottish Government has designated 2009 as a Year of Homecoming for those who are connected with, or have an affinity with Scotland and by now you may have seen the adverts on national television featuring famous Scots



Various national bodies and companies are partners in this endeavour which focuses on five areas for special events around the country and throughout the year:

Robert Burns – Whisky – Golf – Ancestry  
The Enlightenment (Scottish innovations)

(To view the details in full, go to the website  
[www.homecomingscotland.com/caledonia.html](http://www.homecomingscotland.com/caledonia.html))

### *“as if I were an angel”*



As a Christian you may not feel particularly drawn to what is clearly a tourism marketing initiative, but take a moment to reflect on the creative spiritual possibilities of Homecoming as a theme: The Church of Scotland - in company with the other Scottish Churches -

have entered this partnership, because they see its potential as a stimulating call to witness and welcome in 2009.

It's a great opportunity for us to take stock of who we are and what we do as Christian communities. It's a great opportunity

to offer a warm Christian welcome to neighbours and strangers through special events, for thereby "we entertain angels unawares".

Whether you are a new comer, visitor or a long-time member, young or not so young, you are welcome at Sunday Services and our mid-week activities. We are inclusive and kid-friendly folks, trying our best to share God's love and make a difference in our community and our world.

Come as you are, and stay for coffee and meet new friends. We'd like to get to know you. Explore our web pages and get to know us. There is always room in our family for you.

As the new minister, I am looking forward to seeing you joining our church family that is creative and warm, open and adventurous. I'm planning to start International Students ministry in our church. If you're looking for a faith community where you can worship God and offer yourself for service to the world, come on in! There's no time like transition to join us.

Yours in Him,

Rev Peter Gill