

From the Rector

Time does funny things. Today as I write this I will have been the Rector of St John's and St Margaret's, Lunanhead for three weeks and lived here for six weeks. Such short timescales but in some ways it feels as if I've been here forever! The cooing pigeon that sits on the chimney pot above my study is now a very familiar sound as I tap away on the keyboard. Neil rehearsing early on a Sunday morning is already a favourite part of my week as I prepare for the 11am service.

In what seems like slower time I get to know what feels right as I lead worship with you – the same liturgy but always a slightly different dance! I've always found mid-week services give something different and St John's follows that expectation. More informal, more time devoted to hospitality and fellowship, it meets our needs for worship and witness with gentleness and laughter.

Names, oh names! Now that doesn't come quickly enough! Bear with me as I get to know you by your name. I am now getting out and about and meeting you individually and that will certainly help. Learning your story as well as your name is good – everyone has an important story and I look forward to listening to them all.

What else is in the future? Well, by the time you are reading this we will have had our first vestry meeting in this new chapter of St John's life. There seems lots to discuss – worship over the next months, our ministry priorities, buildings, money...there is quite a long list. But it is all exciting. Over the past three weeks I have also been meeting with other clergy, local councillors, voluntary groups and statutory and voluntary service providers. All of this is allowing me to build up a picture of the town and county. We also need to come together as a congregation to share thoughts and ideas about our needs and the needs around us and how we might respond. I'll be discussing with the vestry how we might best do that. As ideas form on this and other things we'll make sure to include little bulletins in the pew sheet and in future editions of the Eagle.

Why do we do all this? We want everyone to experience the living God. I leave you with part of a meditation that I used this morning – a variation of a well-known Francis of Assisi prayer.

Make me an instrument Lord of thy peace As I let go As I release

Make me an instrument Humble and free As I awaken the living Christ in me

With love

Elaine

Forthcoming Events

Saturday October 20th Consecration of the Revd. Ian Paton
Friday November 16th Supper with speaker Angus Macmillan Douglas

THE PITLOCHRY THEATRE OUTING - June 2018

The Rise and Fall of Little Voice' began life as a stage-play by Jim Cartwright but may be more commonly known as the subject of a film. It is a period piece of (roughly) 'the 70s'.

The plot may be summed up by: Repulsive girl 'L.V' addicted to her record collection, has a very fine voice and is clever at mimicking 'her stars'*. Her bedroom is a resort from her dissolute, bullying mother. Mother's 'boy friend' sees LV as a pot of gold at the end of *his* rainbow. It all ends in tears for him and the mother but in vindication, triumph and freedom for LV.

There is a Romeo and Juliet moment between LV and a junior telephone installation engineer, which did not seem to be resolved whilst giving some light relief – but one can't have everything. I suppose that is why 'soaps' are so popular.

So why does the playwright refer to the rise and *fall* of LV? Was he implying that LV would have been better off exploited? After all, she would have outgrown her exploiters. It is a good play advertised as a comedy that leaves you chewing over things. There were two superb cameo performances front of curtain – a bit disgusting but clever in their way! Perhaps that remark is like backing both horses in a two horse race. I, for one, winced at times, in the scene setting for all my barrack room and workplace experience. Would I like to see this play again? No, probably not. The playwright has made his pitch and has influenced us, for good I hope.

*Of course, it is the actress who has the very fine voice and is the clever mimic. A superb performance, as judged by the response from 'the house'.

However, I think the main feature of our annual outing was the Fellowship (capital 'F') part of the process of keeping 'we' and 'us' and 'our' in our vocabulary. There was also a scenic pleasure of visiting once again the 'Queen of Counties'.

The picnic is of course a highlight of the afternoon and we were fortunate for weather, experiencing only a few seconds of a very fine shower. Our thanks go to our driver, for his help with the baggage and for his steady driving; and last, but not least of course, to Margaret and Roger for master-minding with such diligence the whole Outing.

Gordon Miller.

Rotas

Sunday August 5th

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Exodus 16: 2 – 4, 9 – 15, Ephesians 4: 1 – 16, John 6: 24 - 35

Reader: Fay Slingsby

Wednesday August 8th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday August 12th

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

1 Kings 19: 4 – 8, Ephesians 4:25 – 5: 2, John 35: 41 - 51

Reader: Eryl Rowlands

Wednesday August 15th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday August 19th

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Proverbs 9: 1 – 6, Ephesians 5: 15 - 20, John 6: 51 - 58

Reader: Nora Craig

Wednesday August 22nd

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday August 26th

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Joshua 34: 1 – 2a, 14 – 18, Ephesians 6: 10- 20, John 6: 56 - 69

Reader: Douglas Burt

Wednesday August 29th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday September 2nd

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Deuteronomy 4: 1–2, 6–9, James 1:17–27, Mark 7: 1–8, 14 -15, 21 –23

Reader: Madeline Kingston

Wednesday September 5th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday September 9th

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 35: 4 – 7a, James 2: 1 – 10 (11 – 13) 14 – 17, Mark 7: 24 – 37

Reader: Eleanor Rowlands

Wednesday September 12th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday 16th September

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 50: 4 – 9a, James 3: 1 – 12, Mark 8: 27 - 38

Reader: Lee Winks

FACT NEWS

The Annual General Meeting of Forfar Action of Churches Together took place on 14th June. I was delighted that a few members of the congregation joined me for the meeting, thank you to those who came. Judy Hill has agreed to be a second representative for St John's on the FACT committee – thank you Judy.

The Charity which FACT will support for the year 2018/19 is once again the Inspiration Orchestra and last year's proceeds will be handed over when the Inspiration Orchestra visits Forfar and presents a concert at the East and Old on 24th August.

Rev Maggie Hunt of St Margaret's Forfar assumed the Chair for the year with Rev Brian Mulraine as Vice Chair.

Sheila Crichton stood down as Treasurer and Lynda Stobbs of St Fergus volunteered to fill this role. Bill Reid stood down as Secretary and his replacement has yet to be confirmed.

Under A.O.C.B. the arrival of a new Rector for St John's was announced, and an invitation was extended for interested members to attend the Revd. Elaine Garman's Institution on 14th July.

MARGARET COUSINS
FACT REPRESENTATIVE

July 5th to 15th

A very significant (if hyperactive?) 10 days in the life of St. John's.

Congregational picnic at Auchmithie on Thursday July 5th, preceded by a boat trip to the Bell Rock for a lucky few (about 14)

The idea to visit the rock was the dream child of Ian Young, who from an early age had longed to go there, and of Douglas and Barbara Burt, who put a huge amount of organisation into the day (including managing the wonderful weather for us).

Having lived all my married life almost, on a clear day, within sight of the Bell Rock, and had been brought up on the ballad as my mother could recite it by heart, I also had always longed to go there so was thrilled when the opportunity arose. As a cautionary tale the ballad is hard to beat. The baddie (the wicked Sir Ralph the Rover) got his comeuppance big time. We are not told whether the good Abbot of Aberbrothock wallowed in a certain Schaden Freude, but no doubt he was far too saintly for that.

The story tells of the good Abbot of Aberbrothock who placed a bell on the treacherous Inchcape (aka Bell) Rock to warn ships of its presence. The wicked Sir Ralph the Rover who didn't like the Abbot, made sure no-one would go on blessing him by cutting the bell off. Inevitably he was, as it were, hoist on his own petard, and, coming back from a voyage of extensive plundering and pillaging, was the first to come to grief on the bell-less rock.

That is the old story, but more importantly, in 1807 it was decided to build a lighthouse there, achieved by the Stevenson Brothers with great difficulty as the building occupies the whole rock. The construction was extremely hazardous, and described at the time as one of the seven wonders of the world of engineering. It was manned up until 1988; for the keeper it must have been a very lonely existence.

We had the wonderful weather described in the ballad:-

**No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was as still as she could be
The sun in heaven was shining gay
All things were joyful on that day
The seabirds screamed as they wheeled round
And they were joyous in the sound.**

The round trip took about two and a half hours, in glorious sunshine, almost mill pond conditions in the sea, several very close up sightings of seals basking on the few small rocks surrounding the lighthouse, and of gannets swooping down in their dramatic dives, seagulls and puffins constantly around. The boat was rather alarmingly called The Ultimate Predator, but that luckily did not seem to deter the seals at all.....The return journey along the wonderful red sandstone cliffs just south of Lunan Bay was a truly great experience. Our very high expectations of the whole expedition were exceeded 100%.

Dorothy Bruce-Gardyne



Many members of the congregation, plus those who had braved the boat trip to the Bell Rock lighthouse, assembled on the grassy area surrounding St Peter's Church, Auchmithie prior to a brief Eucharist service held in the church led by the Revd. Ian Young. It was appropriate that Bishop Ted was with us to enjoy the day as he was instrumental in purchasing the church from the Church of Scotland and adding it to the SEC collection. The setting was ideal for the picnic which followed. A motley selection of picnic chairs was arranged in a wide circle around tables which had been brought from the Church Halls and in true St John's style were laden with delicious food items. There was a selection of cold meats, quiche, a variety of salad items and desserts, truly a veritable feast to the eye and the tongue. As well as drinks we the revellers had brought ourselves, there was copious amounts of elderflower cordial. Conversation flowed and a great time was had by all. Sincere thanks are due to those who planned, prepared and executed all the arrangements for a splendid day.

Could we have had a really auspicious omen that day, in that while we were gathered in the church at Auchmithie, a delightful black cat joined us, padding once or twice up and down the aisle?

Douglas Burt



Sunday July 8th The Congregational Lunch

Congregational lunch following our last Eucharist of the Interregnum.

Sunday 8th July was the last Eucharist before the institution of our new rector. The Venerable Ian Young delivered the sermon ending with thanks for the welcome and fellowship with which he had been received into St. John's. He gave a blessing and best wishes for the new chapter about to be opened in the life of St. John's.

As was acknowledged in the June/July edition of the Eagle, we are only too aware of how blessed we have been in the clergy who have visited and looked after us during the past few years. It was fitting that Ian delivered the final sentence in the chapter in the life of St. John's about to close, such was the support, counsel and spiritual leadership which he had given to the congregation.

In recognition of his contribution to us, the Bruce-Gardyne family organized a splendid lunch after the service for all the congregation at Guthrie village hall. And what a wonderful and joyful lunch it was; planned, prepared and performed (are waiters not closet thespians?) to perfection by the family - there were even doggie bags to take home.

Elsewhere in this edition, writing about the Pitlochry Theatre outing, the importance of 'Fellowship' is highlighted as part of the process of remembering 'we' and 'us' and 'our'. At lunch such fellowship was palpable, and gave an opportunity to express the congregation's appreciation to the Bruce-Gardynes to enable the Church family collectively to say 'thank you' to Ian.



9th – 11th Breathing space

12th , 13th Rehearsals for the Service Choir rehearsal

13th a.m. Flower arrangers

Friday morning, 13th July, saw so many donations of flowers and foliage arrive at St John's along with some willing volunteers to fill vases for just about every available ledge and floor space. Every flower was used, and the resulting effect was a riot of colour. Thank you to all who donated and the merry band of flower arrangers.

MARGARET COUSINS

Saturday 14th 1 p.m. Elaine's Institution followed by reception in the hall.

Heather Gourlay, a member of our extended choir and a good friend of St. John's writes: -

- "It is always a pleasure to sing in St John's. It has a lovely acoustic but there is also wonderful music, and the sense that one is part of an ancient and beautiful tradition. However, on the 14th of July at the institution of the new Rector, there was something else. Perhaps it was the glamour that a flock of clergy in its best vestments brings, or perhaps it was the meeting of East and West – all those folk from Argyll and the Isles were an encouraging reminder that the church is more than a collection of embattled local congregations. It might have been the novelty of being preached to by a Dean Swift! Actually, however, it was a service full of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Everything in it – those great hymns, the prayers and the licensing itself - seemed to speak of the goodness of God. There was a sense that the church was in safe hands and that its congregation was moving purposefully into a new era; that Elaine and St John's would be good for one another. Something hopeful rubbed off on all of us present that day and I, for one, am very glad to have been there.



Afterwards there was a great spread of sandwiches and cakes in the hall. All beautifully prepared, and as there must have been up to 100 hungry participants, a great deal of preparation and clearing up afterwards must have been involved. It was greatly appreciated, and many thanks are due to the team who provided it all."

Heather Gourlay

A comment from a MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION: “Now that the vacancy is at last over, how about saying thanks to the Vestry for getting it SO RIGHT?”

A note to the Sewing Group from Agnes Milne:

“I thought you would like to know I am the latest recipient of a beautiful patchwork quilt. All you sewing ladies are very talented. I really appreciate your kind gift. The quilt has pride of place in my bedroom. So heartfelt thanks to all you stitchers.

God Bless.”

Agnes Milne



St. Gotteschalk, whose Saint's Day is June 6th

I have had rather irreverent fun researching a saint whose day it is on June 6th – the day when the ceiling of the porch came down, and a gentleman sitting sunning himself on the bench outside the church, appeared among the plaster and dust saying “the Lord has spoken”. Richard and Roger and I were there at the time, rather hoping that it was not the Lord who had spoken... But I wondered whether the saint whose day it was, might have been the culprit.

The saint in question is St. Gotteschalk, - a wonderful name – He was a Wend, (a Germanic tribe) and married the daughter of King Canute, the one who unsuccessfully commanded the tides to stop flowing and ebbing.

St. Gotteschalk was ultimately murdered by agents of his brother-in-law when he was at Lenzen on the river Elbe. The article about him ends by saying that there is considerable doubt about a) his sanctity and b) his martyrdom. He died in 1066, and was the patron saint of languages, linguists, lost vocations, princes and translators.

How's that for useless information?

Dorothy Bruce-Gardyne

David and Catherine Brex still keep in touch with St. John's, and below is one of the forms that their contact takes. David sent this to the Eagle, an example of “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings”

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek.

She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again.

Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago."

"Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

"Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed,

"God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

Being only just computer literate, this issue, which has covered so much of a very special time in the life of St. John's, has been a bit of a challenge for me – so when I came across this little poem, it seemed very apt....

Don't learn the computer, Granny

The computer swallowed Granny,
Yes, honestly, it's true
She pressed 'control' and 'enter'
And disappeared from view.

It devoured her completely
The thought just makes me squirm
She must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm

I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind
I've even searched the Internet
But nothing could I find.

In desperation I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine
The reply from him was negative
Not a thing was found 'online'

So, if inside your inbox
My Granny you should see
Please 'copy, 'scan' and 'paste' her
And send her back to me.