



There is now a hint of the days lengthening and we can enjoy a little more daylight. For me, that always seems a turning point in the year. We've put away the manger scene in the church with the end of Epiphany and Jesus' presentation in the Temple. Things are settling down after the hubbub of Christmas and New Year. Maybe even some of the New Year resolutions are continuing!

Church life has a little time before we go into Lent and for St John's this year, we start to try out things suggested from all the ideas we generated at the end of last year. Change can sometimes be bumpy so let us be patient with each other as we experience different ways of doing things or completely new things. One of the things that we started in October was to work collaboratively with the Angus Alcohol and Drug Partnership to set up a weekly wellbeing café – the Well Bean Café. Its focus is on 'normal life' and to have a safe place where anyone can go. For those recovering from drug and alcohol problems it can be a big step to go for a mug of soup and chat with others. And absolutely everyone is welcome. Some of St John's folk drop in – this encourages everyone and it's great to hear the buzz of God's love in the place on a Tuesday lunch time.

As I have gotten to know folk over the past months it is clear that pastoral visiting is important to the life of our church – and much of it goes on with many people looking in on others. I have spoken to a number of those who are visiting, and we have agreed to formalise what we do in the name of St John's and do some training together over a few afternoons. Of course, this won't cut across all the visits friends make to one another – it is simply to make sure that as a church we look after our congregation – and do it well!

We are also busy on the building front looking at ideas to make repairs to the tower roof. There is a list of 'building' things that need our attention – easier disabled access, easy seating for those with impaired movement when they get into the church, and better heating (!) but certainly first of all we need to be wind and water tight.

Lots to be doing and getting on with – thank goodness we have some more daylight to help us along!

With love      Elaine

## Psalm 23

For the new Millennium, Psalm 23 might be written like this... (or not, of course! A version sent by Richard Finch)

1. The Lord and I are in a shepherd - sheep situation, and I am in a position of negative need.
2. He prostrates me in a green belt grazing area, and conducts me directionally parallel to a non-torrential aqueous liquid.
3. He restores to original satisfaction levels my psychological make up.
4. Notwithstanding the fact that I make ambulatory progress through the non-illuminated inter-hill mortality slot, terror sensations shall not be observed within me due to the proximity of the omnipotence.  
Your pastoral walking aid and quadruped pickup unit introduce me into a pleasurific mood state.
5. You design and produce a nutrient bearing furniture type structure in the context of non-cooperative element.  
You enact a head related folk ritual utilising vegetable extracts, and my beverage utensil experiences a volume crisis.
6. Surely it must be an ongoing non-deductible fact that your inter-relational, emphatical and non-vengeful capacities will pursue me as their target focus for the duration of this non-death period.  
And I will possess tenant rights in the housing unit of the Lord on a permanently open-ended time basis.

***For beauty of language, and more importantly, intelligibility, surely King James the First and his committee wins, hand over fist?***

While we are on psalms,  
a flippant little verse from a book of Comic Verse I was given for Christmas...

King David and King Solomon  
Led merry, merry lives,  
With many, many lady friends  
And many, many wives.  
But when old age crept over them,  
With many, many qualms,  
King Solomon wrote the Proverbs  
And King David wrote the Psalms.

## Rotas

### **Sunday February 3rd, Epiphany 4**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Jeremiah 1: 4 – 10, 1 Corinthians 13: 1 – 13, Luke 4: 21 - 30

**Reader** Lee Winks

### **Wednesday February 6th**

*10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist*

### **Sunday February 10th, Epiphany 5**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Isaiah 6: 1 - 8 (9 – 13) 1 Corinthians 15: 1 – 11, Luke 5: 1 - 11

**Reader** Douglas Burt

### **Wednesday 13th February**

*10.15 a.m. Healing Eucharist*

### **Sunday 17th February, Epiphany 6**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Jeremiah 17: 5 – 10, 1 Corinthians 15: 12 – 20, Luke 6: 17 - 26

**Reader** Nora Craig

### **Wednesday 20th February**

*10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist*

### **Sunday 24th February, Epiphany 7**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Genesis 45: 3 – 11, 15, 1 Corinthians 15: 35 – 38, 42 – 50, Luke 6: 27- 38

**Reader** Richard Finch

### **Wednesday 27th February**

*10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist*

### **Sunday March 3rd, Transfiguration**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Exodus 34: 29 – 35, 2 Corinthians 3: 12 – 4: 2, Luke 9: 28 – 36 (37- 43)

**Reader** Madeline Kingston

**Wednesday March 6th, ASH WEDNESDAY**

*10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist*

**Sunday March 10th, Lent 1**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Deuteronomy 26: 1 – 11, Romans 10: 8b – 13, Luke 4: 1 - 13

**Reader** Walter Lee

**Wednesday March 13th**

*10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist*

.....

**St. Margarets, Lunanhead**

is continuing to hold services twice a month at 2 p.m. On the first Sunday, the service is taken by Lawson Memorial Church, and on the third Sunday by St. John's.

**FACT NEWS**

St. John's will be hosting the World Day of Prayer this year and we hope as many people as possible will come to the evening Service. The date is Friday March 1st and there will be an afternoon Service at one of the Forfar Care Homes, the exact location has yet to be decided (details will be in the weekly pew sheet). The focus this year is on the people of Slovenia.

Lent begins on March 6th and the FACT Lent Lunches will once again be held each Friday at the East and Old Church starting at noon. We are responsible for the Lent Lunch on 15<sup>th</sup> March, and offers of help would be much appreciated – soup makers, servers, etc.

FACT will once again be holding Lent Studies each week on Thursdays again at the East and Old Church; the first will be on Thursday 7th March. The clergy of Forfar take turns to lead these sessions.

Finally, thank you to all who supported the visit of the Bellshill Salvation Army Band on 9<sup>th</sup> December. The retiring collection on that day at St. John's will be added to all the other collections and will go towards the final total for the year for the FACT designated charity for this year - the Inspiration Orchestra.

Judy Hill and Margaret Cousins      St. John's FACT representatives.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### **Sunday April 7th            ANNUAL DAFFODIL WALK:**

We have again been invited to join in this very special Annual event which has now become a 'Daffodil Walk' in Memory of Helen & David Lloyd-Jones – in place of the 'Snowdrop Walk', which Helen & David hosted for many years. The walk will commence from Reswallie House at approximately 2pm and will culminate in tea/coffee & scones & cakes back at the House (donations of scones & cakes will be appreciated). All are welcome including dogs on leads. Final details and timings will be confirmed nearer the time.

Donations for St John's and Marie Curie.

### **Friday April 26th            QUIZ NIGHT:**

The format will be similar to past years and teams can comprise of 4 to 8 persons. Do not worry if you are on your own or just a pair – teams can be put together on the night.

Reception will be at 7pm and the Quiz will commence at 7.30pm. Supper will be served during the Interval.

There will be a prize for the team with the **most** marks and the '*prized wooden-spoon*' for the team with the **least** marks!

Please reserve your space from FRC members or by phoning Douglas – 07841457716 or Fay – 01307 818787 / 07831708996. Tickets will be available soon.

### **Saturday May 18th            COFFEE MORNING:**

Helpers required for usual stalls, and ideas for new 'features' appreciated.

### **Wednesday July 31st        PITLOCHRY OUTING:**

#### **Matinée 2pm, Blithe Spirit by Noël Coward**

*"Coward's most successful, inventive and highly spirited comedy."*

Sadly, our normal June date is already heavily booked, and we were unable to secure our usual allocation of tickets together. As the consensus seems to be that everyone is in favour of sticking to a Matinée and there is only one of these per week day, the next available date for a suitable show is somewhat later than usual.

The price of the tickets has slightly increased this year, however from some reason the 'Early Bird' ticket discount (**reduced** by £1.50 last year) has reverted to what it was 2 years ago! Therefore we are **hopeful** that we can once again

keep the cost of the outing to £25. This, of course, is dependent upon us 'selling' all the spaces.

Roger will have to pay in full for the tickets by the end of February. So, anyone wishing to reserve seats should put their names down with **Fay** or **Roger** and we will be collecting the sum of £25 per person as soon as possible. The final price will be dictated by the amount of seats sold. There **may** not be **any** additional price to pay..... but, if there is, it should only be a couple of pounds.

The format and timings will be the same as usual. The coach will **leave** Letham at 10.30am; stop in Academy Street, Forfar at approx 10.45am, and will then proceed to Pitlochry where we will have plenty of time to enjoy picnics or use the restaurant facilities and enjoy the surroundings before the performance starts at 2pm.

## **Tuesday Club – 14th November 2018**

### **Old Forfar – Second Chapter – Alex Whyte**

It was a welcome return to the Tuesday Club for Alex Whyte, Forfar's own historian, who on reaching the '**end ee spoot**' in March 2017 had promised to present part two of Forfar's lost names and places. It was therefore appropriate that our starting point for the 'second dose' of what Alex described as a random, incomplete route through the 'kent places o' oor auld toun' was the '**fit ee spoot**'.

Starting with a 1900s' map of Castle Street and Brechin Road and photographs from 1900 – 2011, Alex described the Reid Hall and Lodge (now demolished) which was built in 1869 and gifted by the confectioner who produced '*michtie fine stuff wi' a michtie fine flavour*'. For decades the hall served the public well providing a focal point for gatherings and performances such as **Il trovatore**, Balls, Concerts and during the Second World War, a base for the 10<sup>th</sup> Polish Airborne Group who were billeted in the town for two years. In 1941, fire caused severe damage but by 1950, following restoration, the hall was returned to community use. Opposite to this stands Tesco the site of the former Canmore Linen Works built in 1867. From there, wander up Brechin Road into '*Jile Road*' and admire '*the handsome and commodious building*' - the Sherriff Court House - which was officially opened by Sherriff Robertson on February 2nd 1871. Back into Castle Street, the Factory Shop where a garage once stood, was a refuelling stop in 1939 for the aviator Amy Johnson during the

Monte Carlo Rally. The Stag Hotel once provided a ferry to ford the then flooded section of Brechin Road – rings can still be seen on the wall where the boats were secured.

The selection of photographs included many of the shop frontages of Castle Street e.g. Cameron's Fish Shop destroyed by fire and rebuilt as it appears today, Eaton and Fyfe Butchers and the Clydesdale Bank (1919). The statue dedicated to the town's philanthropist, Peter Reid, currently in Reid Park was moved during the early 1900's from the front of the Royal Hotel stables as it reportedly obstructed traffic. Walk into Manor Street and view a housing development created on the ground cleared in 1986 where a Baptist Church had been built in 1873. Reid Park Bowling Club, Forfar Bowling Club and Canmore Bowling Club all have their place in Forfar's historic past as does the Gaffie / The Pavillion Picture House, latterly The Bingo Hall.

We all know the Cross – a feature in Forfar since the 1200's - ironically the last Mercat Cross built in 1684 fell victim to traffic in 1799; it was the cause of congestion on the High Street! The principal buildings here are the Town House and the 1824 building used until 1860 as the Sherriff Court when it became known as the Municipal Buildings. Turn west past The Meffan towards West Port past Stark's Close (Strathmore Mineral Water Co. loading bay), 'the Soshie' (most recently Haqs) and on to the site of Briar Cottage Convalescent Hospital during World War 1, now Andrew Smyth Gardens. From here we move north via Horsecwater Wynd / Albert Street, now absorbed into Craig o' Loch Road and onto the residential estate that was once Turfbeg Farm.

An easterly path passes by the Market Hotel known to locals in more recent times as the Zoar Inn, Station Park home of 'The Loon's, the old Auction Mart buildings currently occupied by Angus Council and the site of the Railway Station resigned to history in the 1950's. The last stage of our walk through Forfar's past took us to East Greens, East High Street, Little Causeway and finally 'The Myrie'.

Evelyn gave the vote of thanks and as always, the evening ended with the opportunity to chat about 'the old days' over a delicious selection of sandwiches, cakes and beverages. Thanks to all involved.

**Linda Robbie**

## **Tuesday Club – 11th December 2018**

### **Iona – Bob and Marion Douglas**

The December meeting of St John's Tuesday Club was one of anticipation, particularly for those members who have experienced the Isle of Iona. The guest speakers for the evening Bob Douglas, a retired photographer who was employed by DC Thomson for 38 years and his wife Marion, a retired hairdresser, have visited the island 13/14 times over the past 25 years and are more than willing to share their love of this idyllic location.

In her opening remarks, Marion gave a brief summary of her connections with Glamis Church and their first invitation to give a presentation to the Guild, something she and Bob were more than happy to accept. Marion then highlighted the significant events that have helped establish Iona as a place of pilgrimage and for the modern day 'tourist'.

St. Columba and Iona are of course synonymous, the monk having founded a monastery on the island in AD563 following his exile from Ireland. Columba and his 12 companions established a place of learning and such was his influence, that by the late 6<sup>th</sup> Century the Picts had been converted to Christianity and by AD635 so had the Anglo Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. Towards the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century, the Book of Kells was produced, possibly on Iona, but also around this time (AD794) Viking raids began, the Monastery treasures were plundered and by AD849 the decision was made to relocate Columba's relics between Scotland and Ireland when the Abbey was abandoned. The island became part of the Kingdom of the Isles. By the 9<sup>th</sup> Century the island was absorbed into the Kingdom of Scotland and in 1098 Norwegian control of Argyll was acknowledged. Iona was a spiritual centre and a burial site for a number of early kings including Macbeth. The Benedictine Abbey was built in 1203, the Nunnery established around 1208, and some 40 years later the island was transferred to Scottish overlordship.

Throughout, the island drew people, Samuel Johnson, Keats, Walter Scott, R.L. Stevenson and Mendelssohn to name but a few. The 1938 vision of the Rev. George MacLeod to rebuild the Abbey was the catalyst for the foundation of the Iona Community and by encouraging ministers, students and unemployed labourers to work together this 'vision' became a reality and today the 'project' is now an international ecumenical community. In 1979 Hugh Fraser purchased the land that belonged to the Duke of Argyll and gifted it to The National Trust for Scotland thus providing support for the precious historic sites.

Iona, the 'Cradle of Scottish Christianity' has never lost its appeal, be it the calming spiritual atmosphere that envelops the island, the white sands or the rasping call of the corncrake, population numbers ebb and flow on a daily basis

as the ferry crosses the Sound. Those drawn here attempt to experience this special place, but it is only when the last 'day tripper' has gone home of an evening that the true sense of Iona is revealed to those who have the privilege of staying.

In conclusion and accompanied by recorded music of the Iona Abbey Worship Group, Bob showed his beautiful photography. He depicted many of Iona's special places, the North End, Columba's Bay, Oran's Chapel (where he proposed to Marion), the Cloisters, the Golf Course and so much more.

Evelyn gave the vote of thanks then everyone enjoyed a hearty supper. Thanks to all involved.

**Linda Robbie**

### **Light in St. John's**

This seems rather an OTT title for a few thoughts I had as I was in and out of the church over the Christmas period, but the siting of the building in relation to the geography of Forfar and the amazingly sunny weather we experienced in December and early January has means that the sun has poured through the south window straight up the aisle and illuminated the altar with its white and gold in the most inspiring way. The only drawback is that coming back down the aisle at the end of the service, efficient dark glasses would be an asset.....

The other wonderful spot of brilliant light is one we very seldom have the opportunity to see in all its glory – it is the amazing window in the Lady Chapel, in memory of Claude Forster who was the organist at St. John's for many years. It depicts 'all creatures great small, the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea' so many delightful animals down to the teeniest delightful little mouse, plants, trees, the sun, moon and stars, almost everything in creation you could imagine. It is lovely, but, and it is a big but, it is the sun in the west that pours in, at a time of day that very few of us are in the church to appreciate it, but even without the sun's assistance, it is a very beautiful work of art, and we are incredibly lucky to house it. Even more rarely, if one is very lucky, one can see from that same western sun which, coming through a chancel window can light up the altar frontage from another angle. On such a day one is spoilt for choice.

What the sun does not manage quite so well in St. John's is to provide warmth – this seems to disappear at high speed into the vaulted roof, itself an impressive feature, so all we can do is pull our winter woollies round, and count our many blessings.....