



# EAGLE

The magazine of the Church of St John the Evangelist  
Forfar

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## ***Snatches of the Rector's Diary During Holy Week***

The first Evening Prayer services that I have held in the church on Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week (and an unplanned one on Wednesday!) felt us easing into the quiet, contemplative mood of Holy Week giving us opportunity to sink into silence as well as words.

Maundy Thursday and my first service that day is attending the Chrism Mass, St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth. In this yearly service the Bishop blesses the oils (for sacraments such as baptism and for healing) for use in churches throughout the Diocese and all clergy (Bishop included) renew their ordination vows. It is a very powerful reminder of one's call to absolve, bless, proclaim the gospel and minister the sacraments. This was Bishop Ian's first Chrism Mass in St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane Diocese and was intense, beautiful and meaningful and I recommend that you consider going next year.

Then later at our own Maundy Thursday Eucharist, we vividly portray the actions of Christ by offering the washing of feet (or hands) and celebrate the Holy Eucharist, thinking about the Lord's own last supper.

But then the priestly vestments are removed, the altar is stripped, and the priest comes before the garden of repose, as a disciple in the garden. And being a disciple is tough. The simple task of 'watching with Christ' is a struggle. I'm tired, and distracted, and maybe a little bit bored. I have much to do before Easter Sunday.

The day began with a reminder of my 'authority to watch over and care for God's people' but ends with a reminder that I'm still a pretty lousy disciple myself, in desperate need of God's grace and mercy.

Good Friday – and it always feels desperate, as well it might. It takes us to a difficult place. All present added to its meaning. The depths of despair were tangible, our human action and the difficulty of God's plan.

The joy of Easter however was around the corner, experienced in the jubilation of the Easter Vigil. As someone remarked after, 'it felt as if the church was full' – it was, it was full of the Holy Spirit! And on Easter Day the church resounded to excitement and cheer as we shared the promise of Easter within our community of St John's.

Thank you everyone for our journey through Holy Week and into Easter!

With love

Elaine

## **With Grateful Thanks**

Madeline Kingston has stood down from the Vestry. The Rector and Vestry have thanked Madeline for all her considerable work over the years and wish to do so more publicly through the Eagle. No doubt all the congregation will add their own gratitude for all that Madeline has done. She will continue as St John's Safeguarding Coordinator. Meantime a co-optee will be sought and the vacancy formally filled at our Annual Meeting later in the year.

VOCATIONS SUNDAY: May 12th

'Vocations Sunday': that's just about clergy isn't it? Not at all – we celebrate God's call to every Christian to follow Christ in witness and service. In congregations and communities across the world, people are listening for God's voice and responding in faith in all sorts of different ways. Vocations Sunday is observed in many denominations on the Fourth Sunday of Easter. It is often called 'Good Shepherd Sunday' because the gospel reading for the day comes from John 10, where Jesus explores his identity as the Good Shepherd calling his sheep, who hear his voice and respond.

God calls us is at our baptisms, and we respond with promises to live as worshipping disciples of Christ, to proclaim the good news in word and deed, to work for justice and peace, and to honour God in all Creation. Each of us will live out this vocation in a different way. Who we are and what we do – at home, in our communities, at work – is our calling.

Think now of your congregation, and the different ways people live their calling in it. There will be people leading worship, singing, preaching, teaching; there will be people caring, administering and many engaging with others inside the church and beyond. The bishops are keen to encourage, resource and recognise the ministries that are emerging in Scottish Episcopal congregations, and to celebrate them as signs of new life.

Some will experience a call to authorised ministry, as a Lay Reader, a Deacon or a Priest. In recent years, there has been a healthy number of people offering themselves for ordination in the Scottish Episcopal Church, including a significant number of younger candidates. We need a steady stream of ordinands to be formed for the future leadership of our Church.

Discerning people's vocation is a big responsibility, and the way the Scottish Episcopal Church does this is changing this summer. There will be a wide initial gateway for exploring vocation, with all the varied options considered. Bishops will be involved from the beginning, and a new full-time Provincial Director of Ordinands will guide each candidate along their path, assisted by a substantial team of advisers. New criteria for selection will provide a single integrated benchmark for assessing candidates from first enquiry, through formation in the Scottish Episcopal Institute, to licensing or ordination. The discernment process will be responsive to the Scottish context, and be conducted solely in Scotland.

So, what can you do?

Listen to God, who may be calling you to a particular task in the Church.

Listen to God, who may be calling those around you, even if they do not realise it.

Listen to God, who may be calling your congregation to something that will need many different gifts and skills.

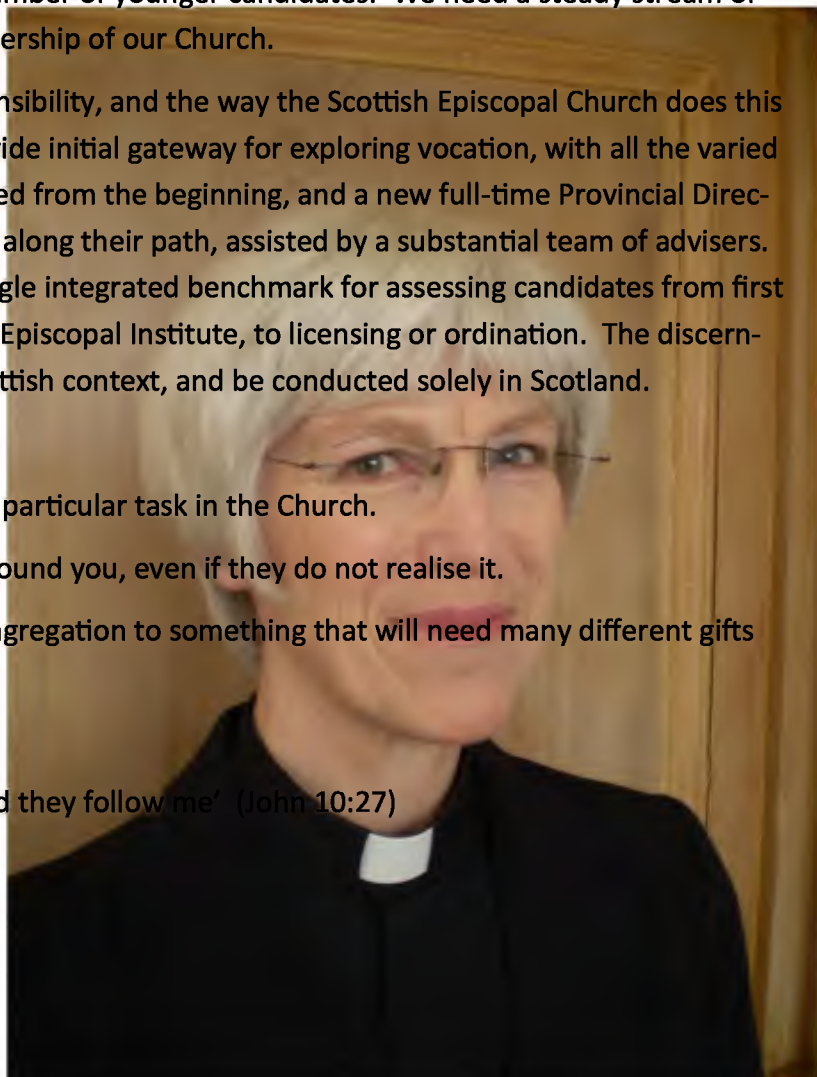
From the gospel for Vocations Sunday:

'My sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me' (John 10:27)

Canon Alison Peden

Provincial Director of Ordinands

Scottish Episcopal Institute



## Getting to know— M H J Hill

Michael Henry James Hill was born on the 10th of May 1929 in The Vennel, Forfar. He was the second child of Lt Colonel Lionel Hill and his wife Barbara. He had an older sister Anne, who was born in 1927. His father had survived the horror of the trenches only to invest heavily in business on the eve of the general strike and then the Wall Street crash. Consequently, as a boy, Michael was raised in a famously frugal household. His father watered down the marmalade, made his own furniture and walked up the side of the stairs so as to wear down the carpet more evenly. Even today he will finish everything on his plate. Despite these hardships, Michael had a very happy childhood in Forfar and



talks fondly of family holidays in the Angus Glens with myriad cousins.

Michael went to school at Ardvreck near Crieff and then on to Winchester College in Hampshire. At school, he excelled at natural sciences and in due course, he went on to win an exhibition to Cambridge where he read biochemistry. He graduated in 1956, the year that Watson and Crick, working in a neighbouring laboratory, discovered the structure of DNA. This immediately rendered everything he had studied obsolete.

He saw National Service with the Kings Own West African Rifles. He could not speak any of the local languages and none of his troops spoke English. Only the Sergeant Major, a grizzled veteran of two world wars bearing an iron cross alongside his British decorations, spoke both. After a short stint working for Boots the Chemist as a management Trainee, he returned home to Forfar to join Don Brothers, Buist. He continued to work there until the firm was taken over in the mid 1980s. In 1961 he finally persuaded Caroline Conran-Smith to marry him. Family legend maintains that it took sartorial advice from his dapper brother-in-law and the purchase of a brand new Jaguar. They remained happily married until her death in 2010. They had four children and Michael is now the proud and wonderful grandfather of six grandchildren.

Despite being completely uninterested in fashion or trends, Michal has been a man ahead of his time: He was passionately interested in environmental issues long before people talked about such things; he discovered aerobics and road-running at a time when these were unheard of; his children sneered at his Birkenstocks (the joke was on them).

In his 90 years, Michael has served his community with pride and with passion. He has been involved with many charities such as Christian Aid and SSAFA. More recently, having seen at first hand the need for local palliative care, he was instrumental in establishing Lippen Care and the Strathmore Hospice (many will remember his marathons for this cause). At around the same time, he and his wife Caroline began to transform the quarried farm beside their home at Taylors Wynd into the Nature Reserve that is now one of the areas main tourist attractions, The Murton Nature Reserve.

He is a Forfar man through and through and takes great pride in being able to say that between him and his father, they took charge of the coffers at St John's for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as Church Treasurer. St John's has been at the centre of his life for all of his life and he believes he is the oldest surviving person to have been christened there. In his retirement, he still sings in the church choir, but in his youth, he made a very dashing Judas Iscariot in the Church Play and for over 70 years has been a regular at the lectern reading the lesson with clarity and precision.

Michael's contribution to St John's is immense. He is indeed a well beloved man of our church.



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Each month in the Eagle we will publish an update on some of the sections of St John's Action Plan that we generated from the congregational meeting and the subsequent voting last October. This month we are looking at 'Meeting Together' and 'Reaching Out'.

#### **Variety of fundraising and social events**

- Our favourite events occurring during the year
  - ⇒ Quiz night scheduled
  - ⇒ Spring Coffee Morning planned and now with plant & craft sale
  - ⇒ Golden Group Spring Afternoon Tea
  - ⇒ Tuesday Club outing
  - ⇒ Bingo Evening scheduled
- New events planned
  - ⇒ Summer picnic planned – date to be decided

#### **Cleaning rota**

- ⇒ We haven't established a rota but more people involved in a pre-Easter Church clean

#### **Periodic congregational meetings**


- ⇒ Date for next meeting being discussed at May Vestry Meeting

#### **More concerts**

- ⇒ Two dates for June and November – see 'Forthcoming Events'

#### **Engage with more children's activities**

- ⇒ Rector now working jointly with Rev Maggie Hunt in Langlands Primary and Langlands Nursery
- ⇒ One of the congregation worked with St Margaret's, Forfar and the 'Pop-Up Uniform Shop' in the Easter holidays



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## Rotas

### Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup>

10.15 Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament

### Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup> Easter 3

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 9:1 – 6 (7 – 20) Revelation 5: 11 – 14. John 21: 1 - 19

Reader Walter Lee

### Wednesday May 8<sup>th</sup>.15

Said Eucharist 10 15 a.m.

### Sunday May 12<sup>th</sup> Easter 4 (Vocations Sunday)

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 9: 36-43, Revelation 7: 9 – 17, John 10: 22 - 30

Reader Nora Craig

### Wednesday May 15<sup>th</sup>

10.15 Said Eucharist

### May 19<sup>th</sup> Easter 5

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 11: 1 – 18, Revelation 21: 1 – 6, John 13: 31 - 35

Reader Madeline Kingston

### Wednesday May 22<sup>nd</sup>

10.15 Said Eucharist

### Sunday May 26<sup>th</sup> Easter 6

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 16: 9 – 15, Revelation 21: 10, 22: - 22, 5, John 14: 23 – 29

Reader Richard Finch

### Wednesday May 29<sup>th</sup>

10.15 Said Eucharist

### Sunday June 2<sup>nd</sup> Feast of the Ascension

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 1:1-11, Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 24:44-53

Reader Fay Slingsby

### Wednesday June 5<sup>th</sup>

10.15 Said Eucharist

### Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup> Pentecost

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 2: 1 – 21, Romans 8: 14 – 17, John 14: 8 – 17 (25 – 27)

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<b>DATE</b>	<b>SERVICE OR EVENT</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY – 11.15-12.00</b>	Bible Studies in the Choir Vestry
<b>WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY – 11.15-12.00</b>	Bible Studies in the Choir Vestry
<b>SUNDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY – 11AM SUNG EUCHARIST</b>	Guest Preacher – Roxanne Campbell, Ordinand, Diocese of Brechin
<b>TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MAY – 1.30-4PM</b>	Tuesday Club Outing to Glen Doll Ranger Centre and AGM
<b>WEDNESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY – 11.15-12.00</b>	Bible Studies in the Choir Vestry
<b>SATURDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY – 10-12.00</b>	St John's Spring Plant & Craft Coffee Morning in the Church Hall
<b>WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY – 11.15-12.00</b>	Bible Studies in the Choir Vestry
<b>WEDNESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY – 11.15-12.00</b>	Bible Studies in the Choir Vestry
<b>TUESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 10.30-3PM</b>	St John's Quiet Day at St Drostan's, Tarfside
<b>SATURDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 4-5PM</b>	National Youth Choir of Scotland Concert in St John's
<b>SUNDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 4.30PM</b>	Special Invitation Evensong & Tea, St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth
<b>SUNDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 11AM SUNG EUCHARIST FOR PETERTIDE</b>	Priory Church of St Peter, Restenneth with Forfar Instrumental Band
<b>TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST</b>	St John's Bingo Evening at the Legion
<b>SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER – 10-12</b>	Christian Aid Coffee Morning – St John's Church Hall
<b>SUNDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER – 11AM SUNG EUCHARIST</b>	Black Watch Standard Rededication – St John's
<b>FRIDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER – EVENING</b>	St John's Annual Dinner & Speaker
<b>MONDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – 7.30PM</b>	St Petersburg Russian Choir in St John's Church



*St John's  
Quiet Day  
'Welcoming  
each wonder'*

4th June 2019

- o Short talks
- o Rest
- o Walk
- o Chat
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- o Ponder
- o Read
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**'Welcoming each wonder' St John's Quiet Day – Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June – 10.30am-3pm – St Drostan's, Tarfside**

Please sign-up on the sheet at the back of church if you wish to attend, indicating whether you can provide or need transport. Who is travelling with whom will be organised nearer to the date, dependent on geography. Departure time approximately 9.15am from Forfar.

Lunch will be on a bring and share basis. Please bring along something that you like and can be shared! Coffee, tea and snacks will be provided.

You may choose to participate in the short talks. There will be plenty time for other activities so please bring the appropriate equipment depending on what you want to do e.g. books, boots, crochet hook, camera etc!

If there are any questions, please ask the Rector.

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## Holy Week - from the lay perspective

Glorious weather led us into Holy Week, commencing with Palm Sunday and a moving and insightful sermon with the Rector such that you could hear a pin drop. This was followed on Monday and Tuesday with short and contemplative services of Evening Prayer. Eucharist on Wednesday morning was followed by the usual; lively chat over coffee.



Chrism Oils

Maundy Thursday however was very different, and the Rector has written of the very moving Chrism service at the Cathedral, when the oils reserved for the forthcoming year are blessed for the clergy to administer to us all. It is the occasion when they all renew their ordination vows.

A long procession of clergy, all robed in white (but not 'waiting around' as in the Christmas Carol!) made quite an impression; a time when one very much sees the value of ritual in our service. But after the service the company came down to earth, to enjoy a great spread of delicious sandwiches in the Chapter House.

We came home to the early evening service for Maundy Thursday into the more intimate surroundings of our Lady Chapel. It was particularly poignant at that time, as in the late afternoon the sun was pouring through the stained-glass window, in particular illuminating the pane which depicted the angel in the Garden of Gethsemane handing the cup to the kneeling Jesus' outstretched hand. After the ritual washing of hands or feet, we celebrated the Eucharist. Moving into the nave whilst the Lady Chapel altar was stripped, Psalm 22 was read aloud, and there was a time of vigil as we contemplated the Garden of Repose where the remaining sacrament from the Eucharist had been placed, before we left in silence.



Chrism Mass—Maundy Thursday

Good Friday - The Lady Chapel was full, as we heard the Passion story read, and prayers said for the whole world, and then something quite new to me, the cross was brought in and stood before the altar, and the crown of thorns placed on it. The whole congregation was invited to venerate the cross while the Reproaches were read, and again we left in silence.



Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil - The theme of this service was – to put it rather profanely – the light at the end of the tunnel - we lit our candles from the newly prepared Paschal Candle and nursed them along until we renewed our baptismal vows, and celebrated the coming of Easter.

Easter Morning started by the waters of Forfar Loch with an ecumenical service accompanied by musicians from Lawson Memorial Church and followed by welcome bacon rolls and coffee in St. Margaret's hall.

Preparation for renewing our baptismal vows



Easter morning ecumenical service at Forfar Loch

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St. John's Easter Day service saw the church bathed in bright and warming sunlight, no doubt contrib-



uting to the happy looks and smiling faces of the congregation who were treated to a service that included an interactive sermon with the inclusion of the children who helped to describe the Easter garden. Movement and involvement were the order of the day with all assembling at the font to renew our baptismal vows involving the sprinkling of the blessed water, done with enthusiasm by Elaine. Easter eggs for the children and mini eggs with coffee for the rest concluded a

Easter Garden, St. John's Scottish Episcopal Church 2019

most moving Eucharist.

A brief service of Easter Worship was also held at St. Margaret's, Lunanhead in the afternoon.

**Dorothy Bruce-Gardyne**



Gethsemane, a picture from Israel

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## **Tuesday Club – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019** **Forfar Open Garden Space – Dr. Douglas Burt**

The guest speaker for the April meeting of the Tuesday Club required no introduction, Dr. Douglas Burt is, as you are all aware, a member of St John's congregation and holds the position of Fund Raising Officer. He was, until his retirement three years ago, a GP at the Academy Street Practice from 1983 and as his topic would reveal his interest in the wellbeing of the local community remains.

The Forfar Garden Scheme (Space) is a registered Charity – No. SC045844 and is a therapeutic garden which is open to all. The garden established in what originally was the walled garden, part of Lochbank House ground (now a Care Home in Graham Crescent) and previous home of Diana Gray-Cheape. Until its closure in the late 70's/80's the walled garden served as a Nursery, later becoming the property of the Laird family who have owned it for twenty-five years. During the intervening years the ravages of time and nature reclaimed its own until an idea was conceived of how best to use the space.

The benefits of being in the open air and working with the soil are well-established facts. Early biblical writings record: *"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed"*, Genesis 2 v 8. Unfortunately, as the scriptures continues, of course there is the fall from grace! *"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken"*, Genesis 4 v 23. Adam was clearly given time and opportunity to reflect. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the seven wonders of the Ancient World, mythical or otherwise, are believed to have been created by King Nebuchadnezzar II (reigned 605 – 562BC) for his Median wife Queen Amytis, who missed her green hills and valleys of her homeland, a clear indication of love and an understanding of the benefits of a garden. Over the centuries so many more examples are available of the healing power of nature. A walk in a park, to the great outdoors of woodland, hill or mountain, tending a window-box, an allotment or gardening on a grand scale all provide solace for the troubled soul or indeed simple pleasure and so to our local area....

During November 2014, a meeting was called in the Osnaburg Bar to discuss the generous gift of land offered to be community to benefit the people on which no house building was planned. Consideration was given to who should be on the Committee, and obviously how the project would be funded. The objectives included an indoor meeting area, a quiet safe place which was non-judgmental, to provide opportunity for social interaction if desired and to engage with nature. Next the group were shown the 'garden' and the enormity of the challenge ahead became very real. Yes nature had taken over, weeds to briar and everything in between and so with machete in hand hardy souls began clearing whilst a local surveyor designed the 120 x 80 feet (36.57 x 24.38 metres) plot which is on a slight slope and has the southern aspect - fortunately the external walls were intact. A find during the excavation period was the Well which was part of the former Forfar Brewery.

Help from the community presented itself in many forms, a private donation of a Greenhouse built by members of the Rotary, a local builder offered to build the paths, then tools and a shed were gifted. Additionally a polythene tunnel frame was given and so much more. A purpose built shed / meeting room was created and is open 365 days of the year. By 2016 the progress was such that a ceremony was arranged for March 19<sup>th</sup> when, accompanied by the musical tones of the Forfar Instrumental Band, Jim McCall of Beechgrove Garden fame declared 'a garden in the making' open.

As the garden has evolved so has the fruit of the volunteers labour, providing for example crops of peaches, squash and potatoes. When you have potatoes what do you do..... call the locals – North Street Chip-pie to be precise, who washed, cut and cooked the crop returning the welcome feast to the hungry visitors and volunteers. Other attractions have included Apple pressing (yielding 340 litres), Sunflower competition and Garden Open Days and now the garden is the recipient of the title of a 'rated garden of outstanding level of achievement' (RHS). Work of course is ongoing. The latest challenge this year is a piece of woodland immediately adjacent and leased by the Laird family - this is currently at the planning stage. A much needed 'cleaning-up' shed for the volunteers who have been working in the garden will be a 'must'. The garden 'trustees' are hopeful to be involved with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme perhaps seeking support from the newly appointed Duke of Forfar.

Clearly in a short period of time this space has proven its worth and if you have not paid a visit you are very welcome to do so and more importantly if you have time to spare, offer support. You could start by going along to the Coffee Morning to be held in St John's Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> May, where plants from the Open Garden Space will be on sale.

In her vote of thanks for this informative talk Evelyn gave Douglas a donation for the garden. Our evening ended in usual fashion, thanks to all involved.

**Linda Robbie**



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