

## **RANDOM THOUGHTS (FROM NEW ZEALAND)**

From the warmth of summer in the southern hemisphere I hope 2018 has started well for you.

We live in uncertain times – there's always some news of disasters and unrest in many parts of the world but for New Zealanders the concerns are natural. Each event I have been to so far has begun with briefings on evacuation procedures should there be an earthquake. The entrance to the Cathedral in Wellington is a wall of engraved glass and the Dean has been at pains to say that evacuation must be via other doors, not via the glass! At a friend's barbecue on Boxing Day there was a sudden jolt when all conversation stopped then someone checked on their phone to find out that yes, there had been a minor tremor. Uncertain times.

Uncertain times also for St John's as we now actively seek a new Rector to lead us into the future. Regular updates will be given but as we know from past experience the process is likely to be protracted. The Church we attended in Kerikeri (in the North of the North Island) is also seeking a new priest; the new incumbent will be leading a team ministry for several Churches over a very wide area. It was interesting that the Services while we were in the area were led by lay folk with retired clergy on hand. There appeared to be close co-operation between the different denominations and at Christmas we all came together for a Community Carol Concert.

With all good wishes for a healthy and happy 2018.

Roger Cousins

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### **December 5<sup>th</sup> 2017**

Was a very busy day – the Christmas coffee morning was held with all the usual stalls and bustle, and as usual very good coffee and mince pies, and produced a total of £1011, which was an all-time high for the event.

Then in the evening a truly wonderful performance of The Messiah by the Angus Choral with very talented soloists and orchestral accompaniment. It takes the best part of three hours and must have been exhausting for the performers but the end amazingly seemed as fresh as the beginning. St. John's was really privileged to be the venue for such a work so magnificently done.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Friday March 16<sup>th</sup>** St John's Lent Lunch in East & Old Church  
12 noon – 1.30pm
- Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup>** Annual Daffodil Walk in aid of St John's and  
Marie Curie Reswallie House
- Friday April 20<sup>th</sup>** Annual Quiz Night with Supper in St John's Halls,  
Green Street 7pm Tickets £10
- Wednesday June 20<sup>th</sup>** Annual Pitlochry Outing Matinée @ 2pm  
*'The Rise & Fall of Little Voice' by Jim Cartwright*

### **ANNUAL DAFFODIL WALK: Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup> 2018**

*Donations for St John's and Marie Curie*

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 and cakes back at the House (donations of scones and cakes will be appreciated). All are welcome including dogs on leads. Final details and timings will be confirmed nearer the time.

### **QUIZ NIGHT: Friday April 20<sup>th</sup> 2018**

The date for the Quiz Night has been slightly postponed this year in order that the reigning Champion Team will be able to defend their Title!! (i.e. Roger & Margaret Cousins will be back from their travels Down Under!). 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.

There will be a glass of wine / soft drink on arrival at 7pm (thereafter available by Suggested Donation) 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 Fay – 01307 818787 / 07831708996 or Douglas – 07841457716 Tickets @ £10 will be available soon

## FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

John Rymer has indicated his wish to step down as chair of the Fund Raising Committee as he now has commitments which take him away from this area for much of the time.

The committee, and we are sure the whole congregation and St. John's community, would like to thank John for all the work that he has put in to fund raising and promoting social activity associated with the church over the past few years. We were pleased to accept John's offer of continued support as a helper when he is able to do so.

Douglas Burt has accepted the role of chairing the Fund Raising Committee and his contact is listed at the back of the magazine.

Along with the loss John and of James Kelly 2 years ago, again due to commitments away from this area, the committee currently comprises Douglas, Fay, Pat and Judy. We would welcome anyone who may be interested in helping on the committee - please speak to any of us at church or ring Douglas or Fay.

Douglas Burt  
[01241 829242]

## CHARITABLE GIVING

We keep a record of Charitable Giving by the congregation in a poster on the wall beside the Choir Vestry door. This shows all retiring collections, the Aberlour candles, the Lent Appeal, the Tuesday Club donations and other occasional efforts. In the years 2013 to 2017 the average total per year is **£1,627**: the 2017 figure is **£1,501**.

The Tuesday Club makes a donation to a chosen charity after every monthly meeting. Their total can represent up to 50% of our yearly total.

We continue to make our monthly contribution of foodstuffs to the Salvation Army foodbank. In addition since May, we have had the option of making a cash donation if that is preferred. The Salvation Army have expressed their appreciation of our cash contributions which enable them to re-stock easily when they see basic necessities running low. In the five months May to December, the total given was **£162**.

Madeline Kingston and Carol Douglas

## LENT STUDIES AND LUNCHES

The Lent Lunches will take place as usual each Friday in Lent from **February 16<sup>th</sup> until March 23<sup>rd</sup>**. All proceeds will go to this year's FACT Charity, which again is 'The Inspirational Orchestra'. St John's will host the lunch on **March 16<sup>th</sup>**. In Margaret Cousins' absence, Fay Slingsby will assist Judy Hill (St John's temporary FACT representative) with the organisation of this event. They will be pleased to receive any offers to make soup and/or assist with serving etc. on the day. Please contact as soon as possible at church or on 01307 818 787. **FACT** will also be running **Lent Studies** which will be led by Forfar Clergy and will take place each Thursday evening at the East and Old Church, time to be confirmed. The first Lent Study will be on **Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> February**.

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### **The Weekly Worship of Christians written AD150, by Justin the Martyr as part of his 'Apologia'.**

Then on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather to one place and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things, Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is needed, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent, a portion is sent by the deacons, And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows, and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world, and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead.

**Justin Martyr, who wrote this lived 100 - 165, when he was martyred for his faith. It is hard to see that the writing above could be thought to be a danger to the state, but during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, this was the case, so in refusing to renounce Jesus, martyrdom was inevitable. It is interesting to see that what we do of a Sunday seems to have a lot in common with those who worshipped 2000 years ago, but mercifully for us we are not now living under the fear of martyrdom.**

## **Christmas at St. Johns’.**

As Christmas Day 2017 fell on a Monday, it follows that Christmas Eve would fall on a Sunday. The Venerable Ian Young, who celebrated on both days, made the very most of this circumstance, with two inspired services, which will go down in the annals of St. John’s as a very special Christmas. In this case inspiration must have come accompanied by imagination, research, layout planning, editing, and burning lots of candles at both ends.

The Christmas Eve service he introduced by saying that the order of service was following loosely the King’s College Carol Service, in that it consisted mainly of readings, and carols, top and tailed, as it were, by prayer. He said, modestly, that maybe St. John’s might not quite compare with Cambridge, and I suppose one must admit that the architecture of the building is not so iconic, the singing not quite so pure and clear, but very enthusiastic nonetheless. And very much enjoyed. However, the playing of the merry organ was pretty close to what people were hearing on Radio 4 that afternoon. Not only did Neil accompany the hymns, but he gave us a wonderful Chorale Prelude, ‘Wachet Auf’ at the beginning and a gentle rendering of a Swiss piece by Louis-Claude Dquin, near the end.

Ian had chosen all sorts of interesting readings – some the familiar ones from the Bible, and some very lovely and thoughtful poems, and all beautifully read.

I am sure that I am speaking for everyone, in quite a full church, in saying Ian gave us the best possible start to Christmas 2017. Both services were beautiful, thoughtful, a great balance of the familiar and not so well known. Christmas 2018 will find this very hard to beat.

### **ROTAS**

#### **SUNDAY FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup> Epiphany 5**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Isaiah 40: 21 – 31, 1 Corinthians 9: 16 – 23, Mark 1: 29 - 39

**Reader** Fay Slingsby

#### **WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>**

*10. 15a.m. Said Eucharist*

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup> Epiphany 6**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

2 Kings 2: 1 – 12, 2 Corinthians 4: 3 - 6, Mark 9: 2 -9

**Reader Eleanor Rowlands**

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup> ASH WEDNESDAY**

*10. 15a.m. Said Eucharist*

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup> LENT 1**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Genesis 9: 8 – 17, 1 Peter 3: 18 – 22, Mark 1: 9 - 15

**Reader Lee Winks**

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>**

*10. 15a.m. Said Eucharist*

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup> LENT 2**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Genesis 17: 1 7, 15 – 16, Romans 4: 13 – 25 Mark 8: 31 – 38

**Reader Nora Craig**

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup>**

*10. 15a.m. Said Eucharist*

**SUNDAY MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup> LENT 3**

*11 a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Exodus 20: 1 – 17, 1 Corinthians 1: 18 – 25, John 2: 13 - 22

**Reader Madeline Kingston**

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>**

*10. 15a.m. Said Eucharist*

**SUNDAY MARCH 11<sup>TH</sup> LENT 4**

*11a.m. Sung Eucharist*

Numbers 21: 4 – 9, Ephesians 2: 1 – 10, John 3: 14 - 21

**Reader Eryl Rowlands**

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup>**

*10. 15a.m. Said Eucharist*

**Tuesday Club – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017**  
**Kirrie the Fit! Allan Thomson & Bob Wallace**

What better way to spend a cold and icy December evening than in the company of members of the Tuesday Club. After the formalities, Evelyn introduced two 'Buchan exiles who live in Kirriemuir' the well-known entertainment duo '**Kirrie the Fit**' aka Allan Thomson and Bob Wallace. Now retired from their respective professions – the Police Service and the Prison Service they have successfully developed their theatrical skills giving much pleasure to audiences throughout the county and beyond with, in their words: '*their own brand of Buchan humour*'. Both are members of the Rotary Club of Kirriemuir and together have raised £14,000 for the Ninewells Cancer Campaign through sales of their CD **Kirrie the Fit** which is a live recording of sketches and poems performed in a Concert in Kirriemuir and Allan's book, **The Moss o'Rora**, a compilation of Poems and Tales of North East Scotland. So it goes without saying, we the audience, were in for a treat.

Beginning with: '*Dae Ye mind*'..... we were reminded when things cost jist a sic, the factory bummers, blue tits houkin' fir the cream and Setterdays spent saunterin roon.... Forfar of course, and of the local worthies, Mosh Dear, Andra Smyth and the Bobby at the Cross. Being the exiles, our next stop was the Bank of Scotland in Kirrie and the effort required by Bob to pay in a cheque in order to pay a bill, proving all attempts to modernise efficiency has a lot to answer for! Considering the professional law enforcement background of our duo, who would have thought one of them was a self-confessed vandal, but it seems this is true as Allan would tell. Working in the Metropolitan Police involved guarding 10 Downing Street and during the wee sma' oors, often meant having little to do. Being a country loon, Allan knew all too well how to entertain himself as memories of his boyhood pursuits came to the fore. A bit of 'carving' was the perfect antidote to boredom, but without a knife in his pocket his 'fussle wid dee jist fine' leaving the question, 'are the initials 'A T' still visible below the 'ten' of 10 Downing Street?'

Several more sketches and poems were offered including the *Christmas Tree Fairy* who is probably best described as having questionable morals, *Gang tae the Picters* and *Sunday Nicht* almost drew our evening of fun and laughter to a close but with one last piece taken from the Bible (McCulloch version) and further translated into Doric, Allan told the story of David and Goliath. Evelyn gave the vote of thanks for what had been a great night of entertainment in Bob and Allan's mither tongue and presented a cheque for Ninewells cancer campaign. The evening concluded with refreshments and mince pies. Many thanks to all involved

**Linda Robbie**

### **'Church life south of the Border'**

I was very lucky to spend the first fortnight of this year with friends in England, mainly in Somerset. Anyone given to sight – seeing is spoilt for choice in that county with all its lovely churches. There is the magnificent Cathedral at Wells, with the moated Bishop's palace alongside; the lovely mediaeval Bath Abbey, and just across the border in Dorset the equally beautiful Sherborne Abbey. The fan vaulting there is said to be the best in England. How the congregations manage to keep these splendid old buildings in the good shape they are, I can't imagine. Wells has a notice as you enter, saying that the cost of maintaining the building is £4,500 a day – not surprising, but imagination boggles at the thought. Also dotted all over the countryside are the small parish churches. So many are pre-Reformation, and it makes one very aware of the terrible damage that the extreme Puritans did to the heritage of ecclesiastical Scotland. One can count the number of small churches left here after John Knox's depredations on the fingers of one hand, I suspect. And we are the losers. These small churches are beautiful, fascinating, loved and central to village life. I was lucky to attend one in a tiny village called Whatley. It has a Norman arch, a side chapel (chantry) with the tomb of a knight who had been killed in the Crusades, and his image lies dressed in the armour of the time. A piece of history. It was lit entirely by candles, except when shafts of brilliant light came through the stained glass windows. To add to the charm, the bell-ringers were all assembled in the tower, making their wonderful atmospheric sound.

The service that Sunday was from the 1662 Prayer book, which I happen to love. It may be in very old-fashioned language, but for beauty it cannot be surpassed. I did, however, have a total change of scene the following Sunday at a Quaker meeting. Language hardly featured at all, as the format was that we sat in a circle in silent meditation, occasionally broken by someone getting up to share a thought as it occurred to him/her. There were two rules only. Any one individual could only speak once, and there must be a lapse of about 5 minutes after any contribution to give time for a thoughtful response. I was surprised that an hour of silence could go so quickly. It was an experience I was very, very glad to have had.

Dorothy Bruce-Gardyne

**A Thought for 2018 – a message from God that seems to have found its way on to my computer**

**GOOD MORNING**

**I AM GOD, AND TODAY I WILL BE HANDLING ALL YOUR PROBLEMS. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT I DO NOT NEED YOUR HELP.**

**IF LIFE HAPPENS TO DELIVER A SITUATION THAT YOU CANNOT HANDLE, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE IT. KINDLY PLACE IT IN THE 'SOMETHING FOR GOD TO DO' BOX.**

**ALL SITUATIONS WILL BE HANDLED IN MY TIME, NOT YOURS. ONCE THE MATTER IS PLACED IN MY BOX DO NOT HOLD ON TO IT, WORRYING ABOUT IT. INSTEAD FOCUS ON ALL THE WONDERFUL THINGS THAT ARE PRESENT IN YOUR LIFE NOW.**

**IF IT IS A SITUATION YOU THINK YOU ARE CAPABLE OF HANDLING PLEASE CONSULT ME FIRST TO MAKE SURE IT IS THE PROPER SOLUTION. REMEMBER I NEITHER SLUMBER, NOR SLEEP, SO THERE IS NOT NEED FOR YOU TO LOSE ANY REST.**

**PLEASE REMEMBER I AM ONLY A PRAYER AWAY.**

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You will notice that a small brown envelope is attached to this copy. This is the time of year when the subscription of £4 is due. The subscriptions from readers and the donations from the advertisers do mean that the magazine does pay its way, and so are very gratefully received. As is the support from the contributors and those who make sure that the magazine is delivered to its readership every month.

Happy belated New Year!