

A Preamble to set us thinking.

A well-known Scottish operatic conductor colleague of mine is presently directing a highly successful run for Opera North. He describes his experience as probably the most enjoyable work related period he has ever had.

His recipe for the desirable state that he finds himself in during rehearsals and performances, and I quote, is as follows:

“Good music making is not rocket science; it simply requires talented people; a passion for what they do; a willingness to collaborate; a desire to give of their best; and good material to work with.”

This blueprint is maybe something that we could apply to our church life and our progress through this tricky period. So I ask could we identify with them? How do we measure up?

We have all the talents; we have the good material in the Word; do we have passion; do we have a willingness to give of our best and a readiness to collaborate?

If the answer is yes to these we need have no fear for the future.

Geoffrey Bridge

GOOD NEWS

At the request of St. John's Vestry, the Bishop has authorised the Reverend Eryl Rowlands to conduct Services of the Word and to act as a Eucharistic Minister in administering Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament. This means, amongst other things, that he will be able to continue the Wednesday morning services in the manner to which St. John's has been accustomed in the past.

Eryl and his wife Eleanor will be familiar to many members of St. John's. They have been regular worshippers with us since they came to live in Forfar five and half years ago following Eryl's retirement.

He has had wide experience in the field of Biblical Theology teaching and as an External Examiner for a number of universities and colleges.

He began his Christian ministry in 1968 as Minister of Kilmarnock Baptist Church where he served for four years until his appointment as pastor of the Children's Free Breakfast and City Mission in Dundee.

Recognising his scholastic abilities he was appointed to a lectureship in Biblical Language and Exegesis at a Theological College in Berwick in 1978. Twenty years later, the College merged with another to form international Christian college, and he and Eleanor moved to the new location and College in Glasgow there he continued to lecture in Old and New Testament Studies and led the College programme for the Bachelor of Arts and Honours theology degrees. He was appointed an Honorary Teaching Fellow in the University of Aberdeen's School of Divinity, History and Philosophy when it became the validating authority for the College Programme.

Eryl retired in 2008 but was called back to act as Vice-Principal of the College, following the illness and untimely death of the holder. Since then he has spent two further years as a Visiting Lecturer for the Master of Theology degree in Old and New Testament theology.

I know that everyone will share my delight at the piece of good news after what has been a somewhat difficult few months for us all.

Eryl will officiate at his first service in St. John's at 10.15 a.m. on Wednesday 9th November.

+Edward Luscombe

ROTAS

NOVEMBER 6TH

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Haggai 1: 15b – 2: 9, 2Thessalonians 2: 1 – 5, 13 - 17, Luke 20: 27 - 38

Reader Nora Craig

Sidesmen Albert Shepherd and Carol Douglas

Chalice bearers Carol Douglas and May Williamson

NOVEMBER 9TH WEDNESDAY

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

NOVEMBER 13TH Remembrance Sunday

9.30 a.m. Said Eucharist. 10.45 a.m. Remembrance Day service. Followed by short service at the Cross at 12 noon.

Readings and Reader to be determined

Sidesmen Walter Lee and Keith Walker

NOVEMBER 16TH WEDNESDAY

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

NOVEMBER 20TH

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Jeremiah 23: 1 – 6, Colossians 1: 1 -20, Luke 23: 33 - 43

Reader Hilary Bridge

Sidesmen David and Pat Green

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

NOVEMBER 23RD WEDNESDAY

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

NOVEMBER 27TH

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 2: 1 – 5, Romans 13: 11 – 14, Matthew 24: 36 - 44

Reader Eleanor Rowlands

Sidesmen Walter Lee and Keith Walker

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

NOVEMBER 30TH WEDNESDAY

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

DECEMBER 4TH

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 11: 1 – 10, Romans 15: 4 – 13, Matthew 3: 1 - 22

Reader Michael Hill

Sidesmen Albert Shepherd and Carol Douglas

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

DECEMBER 7TH WEDNESDAY

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

DECEMBER 11TH

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 35: 1 – 10, James 5: 7 – 10, Matthew 11: 2 - 11

Reader Fay Slingsby

Sidesmen Judy Hill and Pat Slingsby

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

Salvation Army Food Bank

Captain Susan Tidball (manager) of the Forfar Salvation Army, recently wrote the following to St John's Church as regards our monthly collection for the food bank:

Dear friends,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuing support of our foodbank. It is sometimes difficult to understand how or why people reach rock bottom in their lives and need help with the basic things in life to enable them to survive. Those who call at our door find it difficult to cope with their lives. Many are faced with changes such as relationship break-up, mental health issues, and addiction; and on top of that, changes to their benefits, benefit sanctions, rising fuel costs.

I recently answered the door to a young woman who needed help and, with tears in her eyes, she was so very grateful to the point that she was keen to "give us a donation when she did get back on her feet again". She said that she just didn't know how she would have managed without the help we gave her. She was desperate and I was able to give her a food parcel thanks to your support.

She ended her letter with the following: ***I thank God for you and pray that as you continue to bless others, you too will be blessed abundantly.***

A Notable Conversation

I had a conversation recently with a young man from Dundee who had just returned from the Hadj – the pilgrimage to Mecca which every Muslim is obliged to follow at least once in his life if it is at all possible.

He was alight with the experience; he had travelled with his uncle to spend five days in Mecca following the prescribed ceremonies of circling the Kasbah and reciting the prayers to Allah, to the prophet Mohammed, to the prophet Jesus and others. All of that in 40 degrees centigrade, among millions of pilgrims from all over the world, sharing their concentration on the meaning of the prayers and the sacred nature of the place. For him, it had brought back to life and refreshed the daily and weekly prayers of his life at home. Including the journey, it had all be completely exhausting – but now his great hope is that one day he will be able to do the Hadj again.

I was enriched by his open and generous sharing of a very person and important experience.

I had to reflect also that sometimes I fail even to concentrate on the words of the creed on Sunday mornings.

Madeline Kingston

Angus Members Centre (supporting The National Trust for Scotland) Summer Concert

It was another successful Summer Concert for the Angus Members Centre on Friday 26th August. This popular annual event has been held in a variety of venues throughout Angus over a number of years but was a first for Forfar. As on previous occasions the vivacious Mr. Joe Wishart performed the role of Master of Ceremonies for an eclectic mix of artistes. In a change to the usual programme, the audience were entertained by Kirstina Fairweather, a player with the Tayside Symphony Orchestra who displayed her musical talents on both the Trumpet and the Flugelhorn, her rendition of 'Misty' was particularly notable judging by the number of 'misty eyed' members of the audience. Ella Clapperton, a young lady with her beautiful, captivating voice sang a selection of songs including, 'I could have danced all night' from *My Fair Lady* accompanied on piano by St John's Neil Smeaton. In contrast the Inchcape Ceilidh Band provided well known toe-tapping dance music which literally had people dancing in the aisles. Last but by no means least came Neil Smeaton. As a congregation you are only too well aware of the wonderful acoustics of St John's Episcopal Church and who better to demonstrate their quality, before, during and after but your own maestro. Neil's versatility shone through as he played the organ to his usual exceptionally high standard. During the interval as with tradition, a delicious buffet supper including a choice of several beverages was served by AMC members and Raffle prizes were won before the audience returned to be further enthralled by the performers. All too soon the evening was drawn to a close as Isabel Smith, Vice Chair on behalf of The Angus Members Centre gave the *vote of thanks* to all concerned with particular reference to Madeline and Carol for their assistance and the generosity of St John's who allowed us to hold the concert in such an impressive venue.

Linda Robbie, NTS, AMC Secretary.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday November 18th Supper with Speaker. The guest speaker will be **Luke Robertson** on his solo walk to the Antarctic.

See details below

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Saturday 10th December Coffee Morning and Craft Sale

Sunday December 11th AGM to be held after the 11 a.m. service

The Annual General Meeting of St. John's Episcopal Church will be held on Sunday December 11th with Revd. Ian Young in the chair if the Rector is still on sick leave. This meeting is an essential part of the Church's year, where officers are elected, accounts presented and reports given.

Please do try and attend.

Geoffrey Bridge Vestry Secretary

Tuesday Club

8th November Hedgehogs Forfar countryside Ranger

13th December Alaska **The Revd. Dr Jane and Mr Nelson**

Luke Robertson's Talk November 18th

Tickets for Luke Robertson's talk describing his record breaking Journey "Due South" are still available. Details at back of the church.

Reception drinks will be served from 7pm in the Green Street Halls prior to supper at 7.30pm, followed by the talk. We would be grateful for donations of St John's legendary, diet-defying desserts. Those willing to participate are asked to add their name to the list at the back of the church or contact Pat Slingsby (01307818787)

Luke was inspired to undertake the adventure, entitled Due South, after undergoing brain surgery to remove a suspected tumour. He also has a pacemaker fitted. He is originally from just outside Stonehaven and works in the finance industry in Edinburgh.

He started his journey on 5 December and was given the name Luke Snowwalker by a team tracking his progress, as he spent Christmas Day and New Year alone on Antarctica.

Unassisted and unsupported, he received no outside help such as a re-supply by air, and no support from animals or vehicles.

His only company on his trek was a fluffy penguin, given to him by his fiancée.

He dragged his equipment, which initially weighed 130kg (20 stone), across 730 miles of snow and ice and experienced temperatures of about -50C and winds of 100mph.

He reached the pole at about 02:30 after a 39-day journey.

Come and join us for the usual Supper in Green Street Halls on Friday November 18th and listen to Luke's incredible story. Wine and Canapé Reception 7pm.

Saturday December 10th 2016 Christmas Coffee Morning & Craft Sale



The Christmas Coffee Morning will be on Saturday 10th December from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and will include the usual Craft Stall; Cakes & Produce Stall; Bottle Draw; Gift Stall; Tombola Stall (Tombola prizes: **Christmas wrapped** please, also check perishable items are within their sell by date).

We are urgently looking for **new** helpers, particularly for the cake stall. I would also be pleased to hear from anyone who might like to make some of the mince pies that we serve with the coffee. Anyone willing to give a helping hand on the Friday setting up stalls and the Saturday, either manning stalls or serving coffee, please contact Fay on 01307 818787.

The Halls will be open on Friday 9th from 9.30am till 2pm (please note NOT in the afternoon), for setting up the stalls and receiving donations etc.

Notable Prayers - sent by +Ted Luscombe

With so much comment in the Press and on television about the treatment of soldiers after they have been to war, perhaps the following prayers may be have interest (or even of use). They have all come from Army and Navy leaders. *Can they be also applicable to our normal less eventful everyday life? 'The trivial round, the common task', and all that.*

O Lord, thou knowest how busy I must be this day.

If I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me.

(Major-General Sir James Astley before the Battle of Edgehill 1642)

O Lord God, when Thou givest Thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning, but the continuing of the same until it is thoroughly finished, that yieldeth the true glory.

(Sir Francis Drake, Elizabethan naval commander)

Also sent by + Ted.....

It is planned to have a Christmas card again this year, and Eryl Rowlands has found a lovely nativity image for the purpose. Anyone who wishes to participate in this should give their names to Roger Cousins as soon as possible. As it must be printed and ready for distribution in the December magazine, we really do need this information by November 20th at the very latest.