



St. Matthew's Church Perth e- Newsletter

No. 12

Fri 12th June

Dear all

As you will be aware, in the midst of this pandemic there has been lots in the news about racism- initially against black Americans but the unrest is spreading now to Britain with demonstrations against the racism people are subjected to here as well.

Andy Turnbull has contributed a piece alluding to this which you will read later in the Newsletter.

As the Archbishop of Canterbury said: " Jesus Christ was never party political. No wing of politics-left or right- can claim God as being on it's side.

But Jesus was highly political..."

Jesus spoke harsh words to those in power when they were uncaring of the needy and vulnerable and disadvantaged and He expects us to do the same. Words plus actions.

I was very interested to find out what the Church of Scotland was saying on the thorny subject of racism.

In May 2011, the then Church and Society Council of the Church of Scotland responded to being asked at the 2010 General Assembly whether the Church of Scotland should have a Policy with regard to racist organisations, following decisions made by other denominations. Two British Churches – the Methodist Church and the Church

of England –had publicly and clearly articulated an emphatic rejection of racist politics and social movements, and had gone so far as to make statements along the lines of which it is incompatible to be a member of their Church and a member or active supporter of a racist organisation or movement.

The Church of Scotland adopted a similar policy, including:

- Declaring in principle that membership of, participation within or support of any organisation which advocates less favourable treatment of people on grounds of colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin is incompatible with membership of the Church of Scotland and that the holding of beliefs that people of ethnicities other than one's own are inferior is incompatible with the Christian faith;
- Urging all members of the Church of Scotland to examine their beliefs about attitudes towards people of ethnicities other than their own.
- Instructing the Church and Society Council to work with ecumenical partners and others to produce resources to help individuals and congregations engage with issues of racial justice in politics and society.
- Commending the annual celebration of Racial Justice Sunday, and encouraging congregations and presbyteries to observe it

I can't say I've ever been aware of the ecumenical Racial Justice Sunday . This year it was 9 February 2020 (it can be a Sunday of one's choice) but perhaps it's something we should mark in the future?

As it says in Micah 6: 8: "And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Fiona Bruce, Session Clerk
FMBruce6@googlemail.com

PRAYER

Dear God,
We pray for all those in our world suffering from racism, sexism and religious discrimination. For the individuals who are silenced for expressing their beliefs.
For the people who feel marginalized within society.
Please help them remain positive despite physical and psychological strife.
Help them to forgive those who persecute them or who fail to treat them with respect.

Forgive us, Lord, if we consciously or unconsciously share in the conditions or in a system that perpetuates injustice.

Please enlighten all Your disciples that discrimination does not only come in the form of lowering others but it demonstrates itself in the process of granting of privileges to select groups of people as well. Guide lawmakers and those at the head of government to make decisions that grant all individuals equal status under the law.

Amen.

Source: Kira Kowalczyk, 2015

A few Seasonal Clippings about the Garden From Nicola McNee



Isaiah 58:11

And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never runs dry

Houseplant Holidays!

We might not be able to get a Summer holiday this year but at least your houseplants can! In this country we are particularly bad at hanging on to our houseplants well after their sell by date and seem to think they should live forever. In Holland it's part of the culture to buy houseplants every week or so and just replace them all the time, we don't seem to do that. We are all guilty of having dusty, sad old plants languishing for years (well I am)!! Why not give your indoor plants a few weeks outside over the summer? Now that the weather has warmed up and the threat of frost has passed many indoor plants can go outside. If the plants have glossy leaves generally they will go outside. Examples – swiss cheese plants, rubber plants, wandering sailors, spider plants, begonias, azaleas and most plants with shiny big leaves. Cacti and hairy leaved plants like African violets are best left inside, they don't like wet leaves.

- Gradually introduce the plants to the sun as they won't be used to full sun.
- Keep in a sheltered position and check watering more often but don't keep them on a saucer.
- Protect from strong winds.
- Keep an eye out for pests.
- Feed regularly with a liquid feed like Baby bio or tomorite.
- Bring them back in well before the temp drops in the Autumn.

Growth will be stronger, foliage will look brighter and healthier and with Azaleas it can encourage flower buds to form. You can make some really nice, unusual foliage displays in the garden with what are normally indoor plants. Maybe sit the pots on some fine gravel to define the area. Bring them all back indoors by late August.



WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Frances Turnbull, a member of St Matthew's Book Group writes about

"Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson:

Andy and I have been going out early every morning on walks or cycle rides and have enjoyed all the diversity of plant, insect and animal life which we have seen upon our expeditions. However, upon venturing into a garden centre at the weekend, I noted that, in the weedkiller section, the products have a big advert on them saying, Glyphosate free. This reminded me that I had not read the book under review for many years. Silent Spring was written by Rachel Carson (1907- 1964) and first published in 1962 but remains as pertinent now as it was then

I first read this book when I was a student many years ago but it has been one of the most influential books in my life. It was a ground-breaking book at the time when America was promoting its image of friendly Walt Disney and all things wonderful in the land of the 'free'. It exposed, through plain recounting of scientific reports, the devastating effect mans' use of chemicals, in his quest to control 'pests' and increase crop yield or clear land for intensive farming, had on the environment. It demonstrated how seemingly small doses of chemicals built up in the ecosystem poisoning, the whole food chain. Carson dispassionately recounted instances when careless disposal of containers led directly to the deaths of children. It eventually led to DDT being banned but not before the US Secretary of Agriculture questioned

whether Carson was a 'communist'. However she did go on to receive a posthumous Presidential medal and have her face on the 17 cent US postage stamp.

The book has informed all my thinking on my regard for the planet .I remember being appalled when I read about the powder that my father had liberally sprinkled around the edges of our tent in the late 50's to stop 'creepy crawlies' was none other than DDT, a pesticide that was found to be still showing damage to ecosystems more than fifty years after it was applied. There are numerous examples in the book of how the environment has been damaged by the wrong use of chemicals.

What relevance does it have for us today? The destruction of the Amazonian Rainforest, unsustainable palm oil farming, risks arising from post Brexit food treaties with USA, decline of wild salmon, chemicals that are used to control sea lice in salmon farms, our use of plastic, disposing of rubbish thoughtlessly,.

Yet all is not doom and gloom; take a look at Spring Watch on BBC 2 and see how the river Thames has been cleaned up over the years , and how the river Kelvin, which feeds into the Clyde, in Glasgow has also seen an improvement , with the resurgence of red kites and sea eagles. .

I heartily recommend this book to demonstrate how interconnected everything on the planet is and to consider our own responsibilities.

A Meditation thought.

"I mean, what if you knew that you were God's poetry,
you were created because someone else was creative,
See, long ago he picked up his eternal paintbrush,
dipped in his glory,
Placed you in his story, and said 'they will live for me?'"

Jefferson Bethke.

NOTICES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Birthday Congratulations to *Sheena Clark* who is 85 this week!



**Belated Golden Wedding Anniversary
Congratulations to
Sheila and Sandy Murray for 24 April 2020**



Getting into ZOOM

- 1) Download the ZOOM app onto your PC, Laptop, IPad, or iPhone.
- 2) Open Zoom and click "Join a Meeting"
- 3) Add the Meeting ID.

NOTE. This number changes each week

COFFEE AND CHAT on Zoom

On Mondays at 11am – 11.45am
Bring your own cake and coffee, "drop in, drop out" basis!

Meeting ID: 869 3092 8235

Wednesday Meditations at 9am.

Jean Young is the administrator of these Zoom meetings . Drop Jean an email and she will ensure that you are kept informed, should the link go wrong. jy2@btinternet.com

Meeting ID: 859 7983 1315

The Wednesday Meditations are open to ALL and followed by a time of conversation and news. Please consider this happy start to a Wednesday on Zoom. There is space for all of us at the table.

KIRK SESSION

There will be a "Zoom" Kirk Session on Wednesday 24th June at 7pm.
Marjorie will e-mail everyone with the link beforehand.

Givings

St. Matthew's is not alone in finding times difficult in balancing the books. Church members are generous in continuing their offerings through standing orders. However the Open Plate givings are obviously not happening. In addition, all the other income from Hall Lets, catering, conferences and the flat are lost until a new "normal" is established.

If you would like to donate to St Matthew's Church, please make an online payment as undernoted:

Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland
Account Name: St. Matthew's Church
Sort Code: 83-47-00
Account Number: 00760133

Or send your donation to:

The Treasurer,
St. Matthew's Church,
34 Craigie Road
Perth PH2 0BH

The Church of Scotland has also taken the initiative to help in the collection of offerings by setting up a link on the C of S website for all to easily make their offerings and, again you can make your donation to St Matthew's by following the appropriate links. Details can be found at the link below:

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/support-your-local-church-with-our-new-online-donations-system>

THE UNEXPECTED

This is a column when different members of the congregation will tell us something unexpected about themselves and today John Spence tells us mainly about his school and teenage years :

I was born in Orkney, at Evie. I stayed with my mother until I was 4 when, as I could still do nothing for myself, I was sent to Stracathro Hospital. I can't remember much about this time but I'm told I had quite a lot of visits. I remember my mother making the journey each way to take me home at Christmas, Easter and the Summer Holidays.

At Stracathro, they helped me to learn to walk and dress myself. I had some schooling as I learnt to read and write a little and I worked with a speech therapist.

When I was 9 I moved to the Trefoil Boarding School in Edinburgh which was run by the Girl Guides. This was a very strict school. You got a good education but it was very, very strict. A typical day was up at 7.30, breakfast at 8 and classroom for 9. All the age groups had a specific bed time and when I first went there, I had to be in bed at 6 pm. Visitors were only allowed at the weekend. No matter who was visiting or what was on everyone had to be in by 6 pm. The school closed down for a couple of weeks each summer, Christmas and Easter and I went home – each time my mother came to collect me and bring me back. We flew each time; I never went by boat. My mother was never able to visit during term time. I was 16 when I left there. I can look back now and see that I had a good schooling but it was very strict and like most boys, I got in to trouble from time to time. I was reminded of this every time I went back to Trefoil.

When I was 18, I went to Scotsraig Residential Home in Paisley. I was very happy when I went there – I had lots of adult freedom and responsibilities. I soon got a trike and that opened up lots of possibilities for me. Soon after that I read about Upper Springlands and I was very keen to go there. My name was never getting put forward but I persisted. I eventually got a social worker who got me a form and sent it off. All the time that I was in care, the Kirkwall authorities paid my fares to go back to Orkney by plane. I owe

them a big debt for maintaining contact with my family and friends.

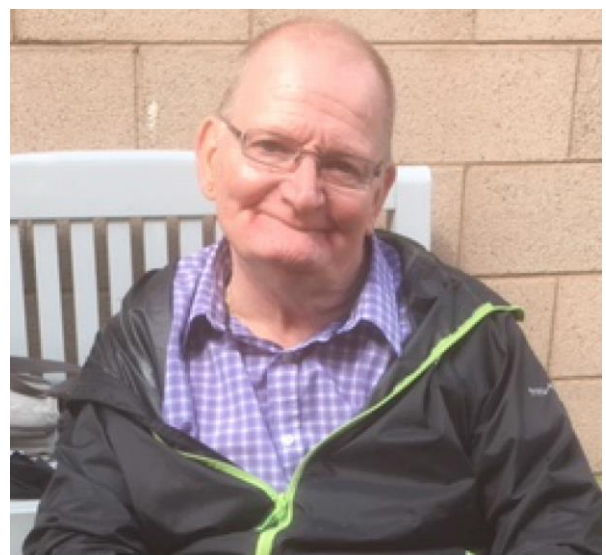
I was amongst the first few people to get a place at Upper Springlands. I had my own front door and the key in my hand. Staff help was there if you needed it. Fantastic!!

Then I got a flat out in the community – the first time in my life I was not in some sort of institutional care. However I kept going back to Upper Springlands to work and about then, I joined St. Matthews.

If someone had told me that one day I would have my own house out in the community with my own job to go to I wouldn't have believed it possible. But I wasn't finished. I wanted to spend my life out in the community. I worked for a while in Capability Scotland's shop then I got a job with PUSH as a caretaker.

Another big part of my life has been the Iona Community. I first went there with a St Matthews group in 1992 and have gone back there regularly. I was accepted as a full member of the Community and my Hallowing Service was one of the proudest days of my life.

Recently I have had to step back from lots of things as my health has deteriorated. However I am still very grateful for all the help that I get from all my friends and carers.



Black Lives Matter - A personal view

Did you see the murder on TV of George Floyd, one of so many black Americans to be oppressed, suppressed and in some cases killed by Police in USA since the time of slavery?

Did you hear his last words "I can't breathe" and the words of black America saying "Get your knee off our necks"?

Did you feel the hurt, the rage and the emotions as the congregation in the memorial service stood in silence for nearly nine minutes; nine minutes in which Police could have made different choices? The famous civil rights activist who performed the eulogy at the memorial service, the Rev Al Sharpton, used George Floyd's last words "I can't breathe" (words which are already powerful in these times of the current pandemic) as a way of describing the feelings that black communities in the USA have. These words will have relevance for all oppressed communities around the world.

Could you believe the hypocrisy of an American President holding up a closed Bible defiantly in front of a closed Church, with all peaceful protesters forcibly moved away, and promoting conflict and hatred rather than the message of reflection, peace and love we seek from the Bible? The right wing evangelists that Trump is appealing to with his antics do not reflect in any way the Christian message as we understand it in the Church of Scotland.

Narcissistic, right wing and populist leaders are bad news, not fake news. We need leaders to serve and not to be self-serving so that the real issues of our time can be addressed; racism of course, but also climate change and environmental protection.

Below a large picture of George Floyd were the words "I can breathe now"; words of hope, certainly for George Floyd in the after-life, but perhaps also words of hope for a better world here for our own communities in Scotland and for future generations.

Yours, privileged and white,

Andy Turnbull.

"SUMMER RECIPES"

Janet's Elderflower Cordial

12 elderflower heads
2lbs (900g) caster sugar
1 1/4 ozs (30g) citric acid (buy from chemist)
1 lge or 2 small lemons
1 1/2 pts boiling water

Large (heatproof) glass or plastic bowl
Large Sieve
Muslin
Large Jug
Grater

Method:

1. Put sugar in large heatproof bowl
2. Pour in boiling water and stir until completely dissolved
3. Add the citric acid and stir until dissolved
4. Grate the lemons and add the rind to the bowl
5. Shake the elderflower heads, but do not wash, any 'foreign bodies' will be sieved out through the muslin. Slice the lemons and add to the bowl along with the elderflower heads.
6. Cover with cling film and leave in fridge overnight to steep.
7. Place muslin in sieve and strain liquid through muslin into jug. Muslin can be washed and used again afterwards.
8. Bottle and store in fridge for 1-2 weeks before serving.
9. Dilute to taste with water, soda water, lemonade or even Cava !
10. Can also be frozen into ice-cubes and used in Gin and Tonics and other summer drinks. Or mix with gooseberries and gently stew - then mix with custard & cream to make a g'berry & elderflower fool.

Makes about 1 1/2 pts (concentrated - must be diluted prior to drinking).



Beverly Challenge

Would you like to sponsor Beverley on a virtual walk from Perth to Iona? She is as I write on the 12th June setting out from Tyndrum on Day 12 of her challenge. 56 miles down. £389 pledged. Please post comment on her Facebook entry to give her as much encouragement as possible. Beverly will post details of her progress in the ST.Matthew's Facebook Page as she walks on her treadmill. A big challenge of 140 miles which she intends to complete by the 30th June.

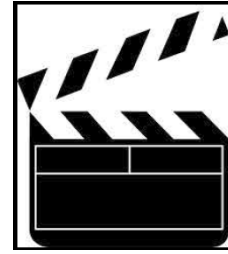
Please pledge your support by emailing Bev at office@stmatts.org.uk. giving a note of your support and making your sponsorship using the following Go Fund Me link.

https://www.gofundme.com/f/june-walk-to-iona?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cf+share-flow-1

OR once we are back at church the sponsorship money can be collected.

Rev Scott Burton, is streaming online worship at www.westkintyreandgighachurchofscotland.org

BBC 1 Scotland will also be broadcasting their half-hour weekly show "Reflections at the Quay" on a Sunday morning. (Check the TV programme for the time)



FILM QUIZ

Do you know your films? As with the Book Quiz, I'll ask 5 questions each week and then ask you to let me have your answers at "the end". There will be a draw of correct answers – and a prize!

You have my husband, Alan, to thank (or blame) for these!

Fiona Bruce

6. Big birds take a chance
7. Performing an aria whilst it precipitates
8. Robinson Crusoe ? With a volleyball
9. Satan is well-dressed
10. It's warm after dark

All contributions welcome

To Contribute please contact me on FMBruce6@googlemail.com

