



St. Matthew's Church Perth

e- Newsletter No. 56

Fri 4th February 2022

Friends,

Ian and I had a conversation this week about how much we feel at home in the manse and in the church already. In fact, when we realised that we have not even been here a month yet, we were totally shocked!

As I write this for the first Sunday of the month, I find myself in a season of firsts – first Sunday service (an utter joy), first Kirk Session meeting (a delight, as we made decisions and encouraged one another), first funeral (an absolute privilege), and the first time Calum has had a hurl on a walker – thank you Celia for your generosity and good humour. Some folk have commented that I have had to hit the ground running but I wonder, is there really any other way? All the while, I am enjoying the chance to get to know people and to rise to the challenges as well as grab the opportunities.

So here's an opportunity to learn a bit more about me – I have studied at four universities and I have worked at four other universities. I think my work as an administrator cancels out any suggestion of me being a professional student. However, I'm pretty sure my Dad would disagree, having been through the ups and downs of all three of my degrees with me, along with providing support from the Bank of Mum and Dad. Tune in next time for more random facts about Fi and do feel free to share with me some random facts about you next time we chat. I'll look forward to it.

Blessings

Your Minister, Fiona



Presbytery – The future of churches in Perth.

Presbytery Planning and Development have been very busy over the last 3 months drafting the proposals for the future of church in Perth Presbytery.

At the Presbytery Meeting on Saturday 12th February the report will be discussed and the programme of consultation revealed. This is a challenging time for the church as Presbyteries have been instructed by the General Assembly to reduce the numbers of Ministers by approximately 33%, at the same time keeping Mission to the front of their thoughts. This is not an easy task given the geography of the Presbytery.

A resume of the Presbytery meeting as it directly affects St. Matthew's and the city of Perth will be included in the next Newsletter but in the meantime please include those who have been given this task in your prayers.

Tom Morrison, Presbytery Elder.

Prayer

Just as I am, though tossed about, with many a conflict, many a doubt, fightings and fears within, without, Oh Lamb of God I come.

O Lord we come to you now,
Some of us feeling weary, burdened or just stale
in our faith. You know our frailties, cracks and
weaknesses.
We lay them before you now and ask for repair.
We open our ears to hear your voice,
The voice that tells us God is love and in Christ all
things are made new.
We ask that you renew us, refresh and restore
our faith where it is crumbling and cracking.
Let our joy be deeper,
Our love be stronger
And our faith in you be a beacon to light the way
for others who are struggling to walk through the
darkness.

Amen.



DIARY

Sunday: Live streamed Worship from 10.45

ID 953 7532 1288 Pass code 058724

Wednesday Meditation at 9am (Restarting on 5th Jan.)

ID: 818 8897 1376 Passcode: 905980

The above can be accessed using the telephone by dialling : 0131 460 1196 And enter ID, and Pass Code where required, above when requested.

To Unmute yourself press *6

Quick link for Sunday Worship

<https://zoom.us/j/95375321288?pwd=Z0ZQckF2dEVpcmNUTWtPdmZxeUhGQT09>

Quick link for Meditations

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81888971376?pwd=UkYxcHo5SVV2Ky9JN0swc3JleitLZz09>

COVID omicron

Guidance from the **Church of Scotland** suggests that all the present precautions should be kept in place with the addition of recommending that those attending should take a **Lateral Flow Test**.

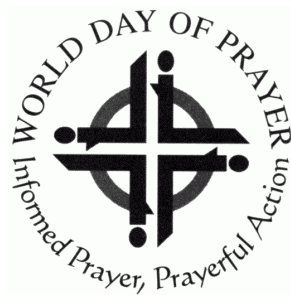
In addition, all church Services are now also being steamed on YouTube. To access YouTube service simply open You Tube and search " st matthews church perth " and select the service you would like to see. These services are LIVE and recorded.

World Day of Prayer Movement

In 1910 more than 400 women met for the World Mission Conference (Edinburgh) bringing their experience and wisdom developed through years of ecumenical partnership in many countries. WDP was born. Today World Day of Prayer is an ecumenical prayer movement bringing together millions from over 100 countries to pray and learn each year. The venue for WDP in Perth is St. Matthew's where the service, used throughout the world and written by Christian women in Taiwan, will be conducted.

**A World Day of Prayer Service
11 am, Friday, 4th. March 2022
St. Matthews Church, Tay Street, Perth**

Everyone welcome



We all enjoyed a memorable evening on Saturday 29th January when we held our Burns Supper- a fantastic evening of good food,

music and entertainment.

Several of our Members contributed to the recitals- Andrew Davies, Andrew Tait, Tom Morrison, Ann Attridge and Lenny Burnett whilst our Michael Ellacott and Andy Turnbull led the musical contributions.

Thanks also to Roy and Marie Nicoll for their "famous" Clotie Dumplings and to Norma Wright for her attractive floral arrangements which then decorated the tables for the Sunday service.

Many more made soup, helped prepare food in the kitchen and set the tables beautifully so it was a real team effort all organised by our Fellowship Convenors, Wendy and Lenny Burnett.

Thank you! Fiona Bruce

From the Foodbank

Many thanks to everyone who supported the Foodbank by collecting a Reverse Advent Calendar in December. To date, over 150kg of donations have come from St Matthew's through this initiative, and we are hugely grateful for this.

The Foodbank has seen a 50% rise in demand for food parcels since October, and is not expecting this to change any time soon. Thanks to everyone who gives regular donations when visiting Tesco or Morrisons. We hope to get our Foodbank Crate available again at St Matthew's very soon. Stock levels at the Foodbank fluctuate and at the moment we are appealing particularly for tinned or instant potatoes, small bags of rice, tinned vegetables, tinned tomatoes, cooking sauces and jam. Toiletries, washing up liquid and other such non-food necessities are always welcome too.

Marjorie Clark

Janet's Jottings

I enjoyed Alison Notman's sermon about the TV Programme The Repair Shop as she preached in the Rev. Fiona Bullock to St Matthew's. I too am a



fan of the show and while watching it the previous week had been thinking that I could use it as a basis for Janet's Jottings.

I am always moved to see the articles that are taken in for repair. They are mostly on first sight, ordinary everyday things. It soon emerges, that they are very precious items, once loved and treasured but now falling apart from years of neglect, or perhaps having lain broken in pieces after some traumatic accident.

It intrigues me that despite the state of disrepair, these items have never been thrown out. Even smashed to smithereens, or worn out with persistent use to the extent they look totally irreparable. Folks have hung on to them, because they have meaning and value. Rarely is it a monetary value.

In all cases, there is a memory of how well they worked in the past and the joy that they brought to the owner, as well as the influence they had on the lives of others.

Despite their brokenness, the items have been kept in readiness and hope for a day of renewal and repair.

With the ups and downs of our own lives, Many of us might feel that we resemble some of those items. We may be physically struggling with ill health, bits not working like they used to, seized up, creaking joints or perhaps worn out with age or excessive use!

Our mental health may be in tatters and hanging by a thread; just ready to snap if one more burden or stress is placed up on us.

Or maybe our spiritual health has taken a knocking. What was previously sound and sure in years gone by, is now fraying at the edges and maybe even paper thin and possibly even developing holes in it. We know we want to believe and all the component parts are still there, they just don't all seem to be properly glued together, lacking strength and resilience. So many different bits needing attention, that it is hard to know where to start.

This is where we need to get ourselves along to God's Repair Shop! The doors to God's Repair Shop are permanently open and we are reminded of this in Matthew Chapter 11 v 28 where He says *"Come to me all of you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest....."*

In the 'Message' it's straight to the point *"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."*

When we enter His repair shop, the treatment we undergo is probably not that much different to the TV show. Only we have to be humble enough to allow Him to get on with the job. For Him to strip our faith back to its bare bones, assess the damage and then trust that He will use all the appropriate tools to start the rebuilding process. In this repair process we have to trust in God as He begins his assessment. On his work bench we find rest. Much needed rest from our daily labours, but also rest from the introspective work of analysing our faith, proving our righteousness and constantly aiming to walk the Christian path. Because we are in His hands undergoing repairs, we can just BE.....

Be at peace with God, be at peace with ourselves. Be accepting of God's repair plan for us.

Once we succumb to his workbench and the tools of His grace, His love will help to mend our weaknesses and flaws, nurture and strength will flow into our damaged souls and renew our faith to carry on for years to come.

However, God tells us that we also have a duty to look out for other 'broken vessels'. In mending us he has then charged us to reach out to other damaged souls whose faiths are fractured, or lamps that have lost their ability to shine and need one of us to light the way to salvation. We can help carry those whose damaged lives are in pieces and locked in a box waiting for someone to carefully reconstruct them,

God's Repair Shop is open to all.



I have just had the unenviable task of clearing out the Traidcraft cupboard; like everything else, in March 2020, our stall came to an abrupt halt, and although one or two regular customers continued to request some items, basically our trading stopped. The result is that, two years on, much of our stock is out of date, or past its 'best before date.'

Rather than put it all immediately into landfill, we would like, for the next few weeks, to have a table somewhere in St Matthew's where all of this produce can be displayed, and people can help themselves (obviously at their own risk) to anything they feel they could use.

The items - free to a good home - include: various kinds of biscuits, muesli, Penne and Fusilli pasta, brown rice, sugar (raw cane and demerara), tea (Earl Grey and Breakfast), instant coffee and ground coffee, hot chocolate, raisins, sultanas, and mixed dried fruit, LOTS of bars of chocolate, both big and small and various flavours, sweeties, jam and marmalade. I have it on the best authority (from those who have tried them) that the biscuits and chocolate still taste as good as normal. And even if you don't feel ready to eat things, perhaps they could be used in baking, or feeding the birds - I am sure there will be other uses that folk can think of!

Please look out for this display - and if you can't get to church but would like something, please contact me and we will endeavour to get items to you. We hope to restock and be up and running again sometime soon, especially as Fair Trade Fortnight is looming (February 21st - 6th March.)

We are proud to be a Fair Trade Church, and are committed to continue our support for farmers and producers overseas by paying realistic prices for their produce. Thank you for your support in the past, and we hope to welcome you again to our Traidcraft stall, once we have restocked.

Marjorie Clark

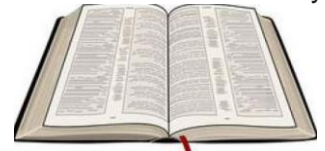
NOTICES

2022 KIRK SESSION DATES

Wednesday 26th January
Sunday 20th February (**Communion**)
Wednesday 16th March
Wednesday 27th April
Sunday 15th May (**Communion**)
Wednesday 15th June
Wednesday 21st September
Sunday 2nd October (**Communion**)
Wednesday 16th November

DEATH

It is with sadness that we note the death recently of our oldest Member, **Mary Keenan**, who was 100 years old!



Her funeral will take place today, 4th February, at Perth Crematorium at 3pm and will be conducted by a minister from Edinburgh.

We send our prayers and condolences to her family.

COMMUNION- Sunday 20th February

This will take place as above and the Retiral Offering will be in aid of "**Starchild**", **Uganda**.

This is one of the Guild's projects and Starchild are hoping that, together with the support of the Guild, they will be able to build a centre where children with a range of learning disabilities - but particularly autism - can come to learn alongside their peers. In Uganda, children with learning disabilities are often hidden away and do not receive the education they should. This project hopes to tackle that stigma, support the children and their families and also help to educate community leaders.

PILGRIM'S WAY WALK



St. Matthew's Church

150 YEARS

As indicated in the last Newsletter, for the second section of the Pilgrim's Way we walked from Dunfermline Abbey back to Torryburn, a distance of about 6 miles.

We started by walking through Pittencrieff Park to the Abbey where we were given some historical pointers by a guide from Historic Environment Scotland. Dunfermline is second only to St Andrews in Fife as a pilgrim destination and the present Abbey was built between 1128 and 1150 by David 1 with Queen Margaret's relics being moved there in 1250. There are various mentions of miracles associated with her relics so that she was canonised by the Pope then.

From the time of Margaret and Malcolm, Dunfermline Abbey became the main mausoleum for Scottish monarchs, many of whom lived in the royal palace which was established alongside the monastery.

Robert the Bruce is one such monarch buried in Dunfermline Abbey Church (minus his heart which is buried in Melrose Abbey) and its architect, William Burn, adorned the parapet of the church tower with the words "King Robert the Bruce" in giant letters of stone- an early example of advertising!

As someone who had never been inside the Abbey, I was fascinated by some of the massive pillars which were beautifully decorated in a way I had not seen before.

Although the weather forecast was not favourable, we then set out for Torryburn via Crossford and Cairneyhill and stopped first for a quick cuppa outside at Knockhouse Farm where we were taken by a row of cows who were fascinated by us!

Our lunch stop was at Fairleys Garden Centre at Cairneyhill, a family-run garden centre, where we were warmly welcomed and sat undercover outside to enjoy a spot of lunch.

We then completed our walk at Torryburn – and discovered how we had gone wrong on the first walk when we spotted a broken "Pilgrim's Way" sign which did not point us in the correct direction! At Torryburn it was interesting to read about the witch, Lilius Adie, who had been buried there. Adie was born in approximately 1640 and she lived in Torryburn where she died in 1704. In the early 1700s, a witch hysteria had swept over Fife periods. Furthermore Adie seems to have been 'at risk' of an accusation. Women accused of witchcraft were typically different, older, lived alone or failed to fit into the societal norms and

expectations of their time. Adie, who was over 60 at the time of her accusation and arrest, fit into the age category.

Like many other accused, after a month in prison, Adie confessed to being a witch. She told her captors that she met the devil in a cornfield at sunset. She is remembered for her 'courage' as she refused to identify any other women as witches.

She was subsequently sentenced to be burned at the stake. This was the preferred method of killing a 'witch' as it was feared that the devil could reanimate a witch's body and allow them to exact revenge on the living.

However, Lilius Adie died before she could make it to the stake. To avoid "reanimation", she was buried in between high and low water mark, in a simple wooden box, with a large stone (weighing approximately half a ton) placed on top. This way, they thought that if she did reanimate then at least she wouldn't be able to get out.

This burial has huge significance for Scotland, and is partly the reason that Adie has been noticed to such an extent as it is utterly unique in that it is the only known witch burial in Scotland. All the other known 'witches' were burned, as was the custom.

All in all this was a walk with several points of interest – and we escaped the worst of the weather so were very lucky!

Fiona Bruce

THE NEXT WALK

3rd section Dunfermline - Lassodie

The next stage of our walk is on **Saturday 5th February** However, as we did on the last walk, we will do it in reverse and park at Blairadam Forest Car Park off the B914 (The road signposted to Knockhill off the motorway).

We will then walk back to Dunfermline which is a distance of about 6 miles.

Please meet at Broxden carpark (up near the electric chargers) at 9am.

Please bring a snack/ packed lunch with you though there will be a chance to stop for coffee or lunch as wished.

Please let Jean Young know on [jy2@btinternet.com](mailto: jy2@btinternet.com) if you intend to join us.

All welcome!

EVENTS AND ROTAS

Readers for February

6th	John Dewar
13th	Colin McKenzie
20th	Lorna Gray
27th	David Sawyer

Flower

(To be updated)

Flower delivery

Feb. 6 th	Janette Miller
13 th	Freda Stewart
20 th	Alison Sweeney
27 th	Tom and Lorna Morrison

Beadle for February

6 th	Colin
13 th	Andy
20 th	Tom
27 th	Malcolm

Coffee Rota

6 th	Isobel's Team
13 th	Francis's Team
20 th	Marjorie's Team
27 th	Isobel's team



FORTHCOMING EVENTS
at St. Matthew's

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM CHURCH OFFICE
(01738 636757) OR AFTER SUNDAY SERVICE

Tayside Big Band Returns!



THE BIG BAND

Sunday 27th February 7.30pm

Tickets £6

Kids free



We're so happy to be with you again after a gap last year for reasons that don't need any explanation! Maybe you've not been to a Big Band concert before. Here's a wee flavour of what you can expect. For Glen Miller lovers we have Moonlight Serenade and Take the A Train. There are some blues with plenty swing, charts from the Musicals and even some funky numbers, including the unusually Scottish- titled Wheech McGee for fun.

All in all, a concert to blow away the winter blues and to think "How Sweet It Is" (another song on offer) to think that Spring is Just Around the Corner (that song is not on the programme –yet!) ---- We look forward to seeing you there. Please spread the word that Sunday night (27 February) is Jazz Night!

SHREK -- King's Theatre, Edinburgh, Saturday 19th March at 2.30pm

After receiving a warm welcome at their Christmas Concert with us in December, several people have expressed an interest in attending the Bohemians next show SHREK THE MUSICAL.

We have, in the past, booked a bus so that it can be a Bus "Party" from the Church.

The cost for 16 seater coach return £15 per person. The cost of a Stalls ticket is £22, thus making a total of £37.

So far, we have 16 names, including 4 possible. Should there be a flood (!) of names, then a bus for 29 could be hired instead. Alternatively, we can take more than 16 by taking a car or two. Please confirm whether you would like a ticket by Monday 7th February. (tel.

01738 634947 or 07918666739 or

jturnbull1@btinternet.com).

Andy Turnbull

Date For The Diary



An afternoon with MICHAEL ELLACOTT

Saturday 26th March

Time & tickets tbc



Andrew's Prayer

Let us pray
Dear Lord Jesus

This world that your creating is a fragile world and sometimes sad also healing and to keep our planet safe and warm. We don't always know what's around the corner (the climate) and to look after it and what we do with our church at the moment but on earth we need to ^{look} after our animals and other creatures away from harm and I know some of you may think it's tough and sad and some homeless to keep them in our prayers and to help them along the way.

Amen. Peace be to God in this Holy name.

Please note the newsletter will now be created Monthly to reflect the church being back to a more normal footing

Issue No. 57 on Fri 4th March 2022 All contributions to FMBruce6@googlemail.com by Fri 25th Feb 2022