



St. Matthew's Church Perth

e-Newsletter No. 66

February 2023

As this newsletter goes to print, our minister Fiona continues to be on sick leave; we send our best wishes and assure her that our thoughts and prayers are with her and her family.

Dear All

In January Rev. Anne Brennan reminded us of the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* when we seek to explore how the work of Christian unity can contribute to the promotion of racial justice across all levels of society. And the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields, in his article "A New Year MOT" in *Life and Work* asked whether there is an MOT for life? He drew our attention to Colossians 3:12-17 which speaks too about unity and what, as Christians, we should value:

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

The Moderator says he turns to this passage at the beginning of every year and sees it as his annual MOT/ service; I think we can do no better.

In terms of racial justice, we can note that *Holocaust Memorial Day* is today, 27th January, and the theme is 'ordinary people'. Through this theme, we are invited to think about all the millions of ordinary victims of Nazi persecution and subsequent genocides. In my own case I struggle to reflect not only on the 6 million Jews who were killed but also the countless number of people with disabilities who were also murdered.

We are also prompted to think about how easy it is for 'ordinary people' to become perpetrators. In this light, today ordinary people must be alert to the dangers of antisemitism, racism, and intolerance, and strive to combat the evil of genocide in our world.

Fiona Bruce, Session Clerk

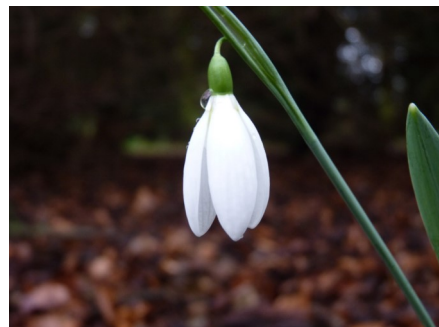
PRAYER

We hold each shining minute, day and month,
In our trembling yet grateful hands,
Acknowledging that full time and empty time
Are equal gifts from You,
To be used, and experienced,
In these liquid moments,
With our days not yet completely committed,
We hold up this New Year to you,
And all life within it,
And ask for blessing, blessing, blessing,
For us and for our loved ones;
For our work and for our leisure;
For our country and our world;
And for Your Church in these times of change,
And uncertainty, and opportunity.

Lord of the turning years,
Hear all our prayers this day in the Name of Jesus.

Amen

(Taken from "Life & Work")



A Prayer for Lent

Into the dark world a snowdrop comes: a blessing of hope and peace carrying within it a green heart: symbol of God's renewing love. Come to inhabit our darkness, Lord Christ, for dark and light are alike to you. May nature's white candles of hope remind us of your birth and lighten our journey through Lent and beyond. Amen. *Kate McIlhagga,*

CHURCH NEWS

While Rev Fiona Bullock remains on sick leave. Perth Presbytery has appointed Rev. Bob Milne as our Interim Moderator during her absence. We are also grateful to those who will be leading worship during this period.

If you or someone you know has pastoral care needs, please contact the office or Marjorie Clark of our Pastoral Care team in the first instance.



The Sacrament of Communion

will be celebrated on Sunday 26th February at 11a.m.

All who love the Lord are welcome at His table.

There will be a retiring collection in aid of Perth Street Pastors. (see *back page*.)

This year's **World Day of Prayer** service will be held in **St John's Episcopal Church, Princes St.** at **11a.m. on Friday 3rd March**

WARM SPACES

Are you fed up or looking for something new to try or hating the dreich winter weather? Then this is for you! Our Church is open throughout January, February and March on a Wednesday and Saturday afternoon 1.30-4.30pm.

So far we have had "blethers" and "Storytelling" and a Burns concert and the Poster below gives you an idea of the weekly activities on offer- though you can just sit quietly and read a book or magazine or do a board game whilst enjoying a cup of tea if you'd like?

What I'd like to emphasise is that this time is as much about the *warmth of fellowship* as the warmth of the building - so come along and join us - and tell your friends too!

Fiona Bruce, Session Clerk



WEEKLY FREE ACTIVITIES

Wednesday and Saturday
1.30—4.30p.m.

All welcome to our Warm Space

1 & 4 February	Film Afternoon
8 & 11 February	"Name that Tune"
15 & 18 February	Cake Toppers
22 & 25 February	Carpet Bowls
1 & 4 March	Floral demonstration
8 & 11 March	Scotland Quiz
15 & 18 March	Sewing demonstration
22 & 25 March	Film Afternoon
29 March	Easter Surprise

You Tube and Zoom

Links for the Sunday services:

Sunday 29th January

<https://youtu.be/qAOFGh2CcSU>

Sunday 5th February

https://youtu.be/mod8O73_VmQ

Sunday 12th February

<https://youtu.be/gkxduQEYAhI>

Sunday 19th February

<https://youtu.be/3ZqJLrMfQml>

Sunday 26th February

<https://youtu.be/Rzujbg6gclc>

**Zoom code for Sunday mornings
from 10.30a.m.**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86884300748>

Meeting ID: 868 8430 0748

**Zoom code for Wednesday morning
reflections—from 8.50a.m.**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88455159577>

Meeting ID: 884 5515 9577

More Volunteers Required – AV Team

St Matt's AV Team are seeking additional volunteers to help operate the equipment on the sound desk during Sunday Service and to cover an increasing number of other events taking place in the Sanctuary. No experience required and full training will be provided. In terms of commitment, we hope, with additional volunteers, that you would be required to assist a maximum of one or two Sundays a month. If this is something which interests you, please speak to one of the team or pop up to see us on a Sunday for a chat with no obligation.

Thank you.

For your interest.....John Paton from the AV team reports that over the last 50 live/recorded services on You Tube, we had 3,597 views, an average of 70 views per streamed service; the highest service had 282 views, and the lowest only 34. On average we have about eleven 'live' viewers on a Sunday morning, plus 10 Zoom viewers per week.

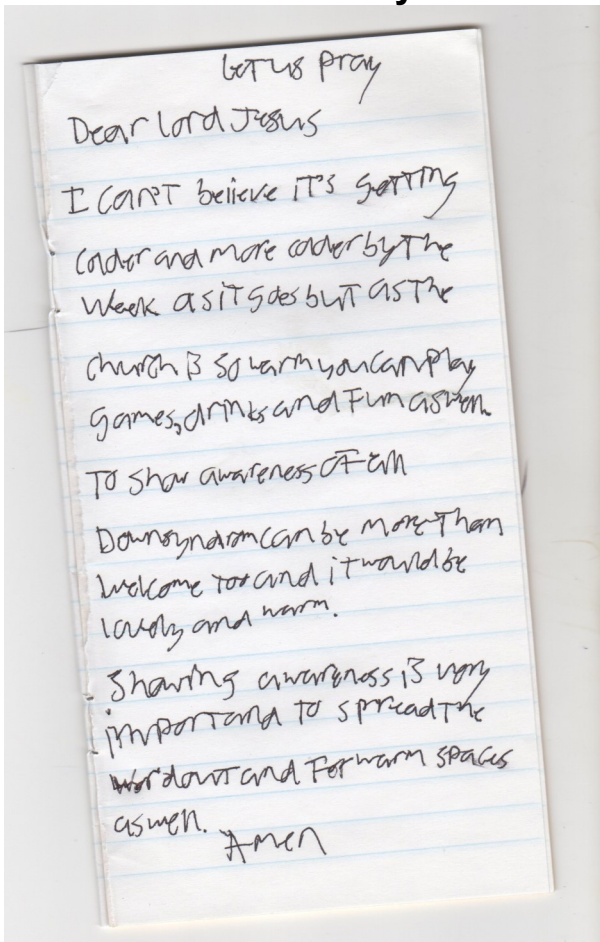
People often comment about the beautiful flowers which decorate our sanctuary week by week, and this is thanks to our Flower Convener Norma Wright, who arranges them week by week. She writes:



Dear members of St. Matthews, I would like to thank everyone who so kindly contributed towards the church flowers last year. I would also like to express my gratitude to the members who help out often over the year when I have spaces to fill* and a shortage of money in the flower fund. A big thanks to Marjorie for her part in organising the distribution of the flowers and to the volunteers who deliver them after the service. If you would like to help out in any way, by donating, arranging the flowers, or delivering them, speak to Marjorie or myself. Thank you again for generosity, help and kindness over the year. Yours faithfully,
Norma Wright Flower Convener

* we are looking for donors for the following Sundays in 2023: 23rd April, 23rd July, 30th July, 3rd September, 17th December and 31st December - if you would like to donate flowers on any of these Sundays, please speak to Norma.

Andrew's Prayer



**TAYSIDE
 BIG BAND**
7.30pm Sunday 19th February

Singing and playing your swinging big band favourites including "That Ole' Devil called Love" and "Chattanooga Choo Choo".
 Featuring guest vocalist Sheila Gaughan.
 Led by Andrew Mann

**ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH,
 TAY STREET, PERTH.**


Tickets available on a Sunday,
 Church office or at door: £8 Children Free

SUMMER EXHIBITIONS


As with last year we are to run **Summer Exhibitions** in St Matthew's from **1st July** for 8 weeks showcasing various arts and crafts throughout and welcoming visitors. This year we're looking for 8 people to organise a week each; i.e. supervise the set up one Saturday and take down the following Saturday of one exhibition and organise the Rota of volunteers offering teas and coffees for that one particular week. (The craftspeople will be present throughout at their particular exhibition). Can you offer your time on a Saturday for a few hours to do this? If so, please contact me.

Thanks. *Fiona Bruce*
 FMBruce6@googlemail.com

St. Matthew's Church
 presents
**AFTERNOON
 AT THE MOVIES**



*Join us for
 Lunch & a Movie*



Thursday 23rd February @ 12noon

£8 LUNCH & MOVIE SPECIAL
 Includes soup, sandwiches & drink.

***** MUST BE BOOKED *****
 Reserve your place by calling 01738 636757
 or by putting your name on the list.

Guild News – February 2023

The Guild meetings are held in the Sanctuary at St Matthews on Monday afternoons 2-4 pm.

In February we begin on the 6th with Tom Ryan, one of the photographers who had a beautiful exhibition in St Matthews Summer Gallery last year. Tom will bring along a selection of his photographs and give us the stories behind them. Then on 20th February we will have a talk from David Brash about the work of the Samaritans organisation. On Saturday 25th February we plan to have a Coffee Morning, hoping to raise some funds both for St Matthews and for our current Guild Project. On Monday 6th March we are thinking about the topical subject of Reduce, Re-use and Re-purpose with Gina Purman.

Lorna Morrison

Janet's Jottings

The pace of life and faith

Here's a laugh for you – I used to run! I know, looking at me now, with two back ops and one foot op later, a jiggered ankle and now 2 wonky knees, you might find it hard to believe (I still can't believe it myself!), but it's true. It started back in the 1980s when I was at college outside London. I got frustrated with sitting studying for long periods and writing essays. A walk never quite cleared my head. I started with little more than jogging between a couple of lamp posts, but then I was encouraged to join a local running club. I had little inclination as I was sure I wouldn't be able to keep up. I soon learned they were a friendly lot who were encouraging, unpretentious and open to all abilities. They insisted none of them were very good, hence their name 'The Stragglers' and their (somewhat ingenious) logo, which was a footprint on the back of the vest – think about it!



I was warmly welcomed and with someone always motivating me, it wasn't long before I was counting miles instead of lamp posts. A few months later, I entered a 10K charity run in Hyde Park. I had no confidence I would even reach the end, so much so, that my friends who came to support me, took me at my word, strolled off for a cuppa and missed my big moment of glory as I crossed the finishing line 10 minutes earlier than I anticipated! I was then encouraged to apply for the London marathon—now you really are laughing – I certainly was! A lovely person called Sue offered to be my pacer and help me train. I didn't know what a pacer was, or why I needed one; when I began the training I soon found out! Sue was there for me through all weathers, she ran at my pace, but always just stretching me that bit further every time, adding an extra mile, or a wee hill; or, as we progressed, challenged me with steeper ones that left me puffing like a steam train! On dreich days I know I wouldn't have ventured out at all if Sue hadn't been waiting for me at the gate. Her commitment led me to being committed to tackling what was required for the marathon ahead. When I felt like giving up, her wise counsel, sense of humour and ability to help me remain focused on the goal ahead kept me motivated.

Pacing is a good analogy of how we relate to one another in our journey of faith. In Hebrews 12:1 we read "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us..." Very few of us are able to sustain running that race successfully on our own. With Jesus as our pacemaker, we have someone who recognises our strengths and weaknesses, is there to nudge us up the hills and sustain us through long periods of spiritual fatigue. He's there when we feel like we have reached our limit and are ready to crumble in a heap, thinking we cannot put one foot in front of the other. God is there for each of us, but we're all running together with a common goal. We too, are 'pacers', there to physically support each other. Some will have a deep-rooted faith, appearing stronger, more knowledgeable pushing ahead with confidence. Some slower than others, some more motivated. Other folks can navigate the dangers, therefore, are cautiously treading a step at a time. We should recognise that our faith goes through ups and downs and if we are all to reach the same goal, then regular support, prayer and fellowship from other Christians is beneficial. Are you aware of your fellow Christians alongside you in the race? Have you reached out to someone who might be lagging? Are you able to support them without imposing your 'pace' on them? As Christians, we are duty bound to come alongside one another in good or bad times. Reaching over to help each other cross that finish line as a community and not to leave anyone behind. Let's run together, whether in the church or out, in our quest to share God's love and like 'The Stragglers' leave no one behind.

Janet Martin

A NORTH EAST DOMINIE : A LIGHT-HEARTED TALE by Andrew Tait.

I was a NE dominie, a country Head Teacher in the heart of Buchan. It was my first headship; I was 29 years old, young and inexperienced, yet quickly became aware of my place or social standing in a rural Aberdeenshire village. I was the dominie and part of the 'holy trinity' – minister, doctor and dominie.

Within days I was approached by the President of the Guild who was having problems pronouncing a word (Buchaille Etive Mhor) and had advised her members that she was going to the 'tap' (top) the new 'hiedie' for advice!

I was not only aware of my social standing but also of my relative youth. In introducing myself to Miss M, the mature school cook, she described me as '*just a young loon*' and seemed determined to keep a motherly eye on me. On one occasion she phoned the School house at 8am one morning, '*just to check that you hadnae slept in as your curtains werena pulled!*' Guess what Rosemary and I did first thing in the morning thereafter!

And, of course, certain expectations came with the position. *Would you like some complimentary tickets for the Farmers Ball? Yes thanks.* There was some resistance to releasing the tickets, until I agreed '*and you'll say the vote of thanks, Mr Tait?*'. Then there was the janitor's elderly father: "*Will you fill up my tax form Mr Tait, and I'll cut the the hedges, grass and plant your tatties.*" No mention of money, but three 'drills' of Duke o' Yorks, three of King Edwards, three of Maris Piper.....'

The position also had its compensations/ rewards. "*I see you've got a new freezer, Mr Tait would you like some pork?*" Panic phone call to school from School house - "*there's half a pig lying on the kitchen floor!*"

Let's get into the school itself. The 'bairns' of the NE are like children all over – their charm can quite often lie in the fresh and frank way they see life and make comment on it. Young people can be the most open in society and we can learn a lot from them. Amongst other things children can help us put matters in perspective. On my first day, I arrived all spruced up, (wearing my only suit, for weddings, funerals and interviews) and somewhat proud of my elevated position. The very first child I met said '*Are you the new Jannie?*' I was somewhat deflated and miffed, fancy mistaking me for the new janitor!

Our son, Simon started school at this time and came home soon afterwards announcing in great excitement, '*I know who is boss of the*

school. 'Dad with head held high says '*yes dear?*' ".....'*It's Mr Young.*' Yes you've guessed it, Mr Young was the janitor! 5 year olds can be pretty sensitive, '*Never mind dad, you're the judge.*'

Positive praise to motivate children is obviously so important. I was visiting an Infant class to praise a little girl who was doing particularly well after having some 'difficulties.' "*Now Julie you go and get Miss F's special sweetie box.*" (we couldn't do that today!) Julie grabs sweet. "*What do you say?*" No response.....still no response, further pleading "*tell Mr Tait the magic word and you'll get the sweetie.*" Julie with big sigh and shrug of shoulders announces "*ABRACADABRACA.*"

There were some occasions when I had to use the heavy hand, figuratively speaking. I remember a small boy with 'challenging' behaviour who was sent to my room. He ran home, and I followed at close quarter (at a measured and dignified pace!) only to be advised by mum he had just ran out of the back door.....back to my room!

The above are just a taster of 'happenings' over a long career in the North-east. Nonetheless, it's time to draw to a close with one last tale which I have found can be sound advice over the years.

'Circle Time' was a time when infant children gathered together on Monday morning to tell the teacher their weekend news. Jessie had been visiting grandparents, and her Granda had a fishing boat. Julie's news was that she had been in the Kirk for the very first time with Grandma. On being asked what it was like, she told teacher with shrug of shoulders, '*It was okay, but the 'mannie in the 'wheelhouse' spoke for an 'affa lang time!*'

Boys Breakfast Blether

The first meeting of the 'Boys Breakfast Blether' was a big success with 7 people in attendance and apologies from a number of other men. So much so, that we agreed to make this a regular event which will take place on the **second Wednesday of every month** in The Capital Asset

(Wetherspoons pub next to the Church).



Next meeting is due to be held on **Wednesday 8th February at 10am.** Please put this date in your diary and we look forward to seeing you then.

Raymond Young (01764 684640) and Alastair Byers (Tel 553835).

St Matthew's Walkers meet on the first Saturday of each month. February's walk will be in the Methven Woods, (approx. 5 miles) led by Marjorie. Meet at 9.30a.m. on February 4th at the Broxden Park and Ride; bring a snack. Our habit is to adjourn to a local café at the end of the walk.

All welcome!

**Perth: St. Matthew's Church
Sunday worship at 11.am**

Address: Tay Street, Perth, PH1 5LQ

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Treasurer: John Dewar

Dewar34@hotmail.com

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CHURCH ROTAS

Door Duty For February

5th Perth South (Malcolm Thom)

12th Oakbank (Donald Stewart)

19th Burghmuir (Isobel Sinclair)

26th Bridgend (Alastair Byers)

Readers for February

5th Jack Rough

12th Jenni Wilson

19th Joan Lackie

26th Alastair Byers

What is Acorn? ACORN is a movement that seeks to connect Christians with the work God is doing in others through caring conversation. Acorn does this through missional discipleship, and uses a unique blend of both evangelism and discipling. It was developed by Michael Harvey (Back to Church Sunday, Weekend of Invitation) More info here: <https://ascend.churchofscotland.org.uk/2022/03/acorn-the-simplest-way-of-following-god-in-mission/>

CHURCH FLOWERS

Feb.	Donated by	Delivered by
5th	Frances Turnbull	Janette Miller
12th	Freda Stewart	Fiona Bruce
19th	Roy and Marie Nicoll	John and Helen Dewar
26th	Ronnie Soreide	Evelyn McLaren
Mar.		
5th	Marion Stewart	Lesley Williamson
12th	Helen Dewar	Janet Martin
19th	Alastair and Carolyn Byers	Lesley Mackie
26th	Fiona Bruce	Frances Turnbull

Please see also the message from our Flower Convener Norma Wright on page 3 of this newsletter.



Congratulations to the Perth Street Pastors, including our own Isobel Sinclair, seen here with Gordon Loudon, receiving the Douglas Bader Memorial Quach for their commitment to Perth Grammar School. This was

awarded at the school Prizegiving—the School/Street Pastors are out every Friday lunchtime, and are obviously appreciated!

The next issue of the newsletter is due out on Friday 24th February 2023. All contributions **by Sunday 19th February** please to Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com.

ACORN roadshow

Thursday February 9

Madoch Centre, St Madoes

Just off the A90 between Perth and Dundee PH2 7FF

FREE entry – 7.15-8.45pm, coffees from 7pm

The simplest way of following God in mission
Find out why this practice is reviving churches all over the nation.

*'I just love it, it is so encouraging'
'It is the simplicity that makes Acorn so wonderful'*

With National Mission Development Worker Rob Rawson &
Acorn National Director (Scotland) Paul Haringman

