



# St. Matthew's Church Perth

## e-Newsletter No. 69

### May 2023

#### A letter from the Manse

Friends, are you full of the joys of Spring? We are well and truly into the season of Spring now and I love it. It is a fascinating time to watch creation. I spoke on Sunday about feeding the wee lambs on Berneray, which was such a treat. All around us we see bulbs, which had been buried in the cold, dark soil for so long, burst through the earth to flourish. Some of the birds which migrate for the winter have returned and are beginning to create the next generation to be appreciated over the years. Spring is a wonderful time of change.

At the Manse, we are seeing the signs of Spring too. Last week, Calum had to take a sun hat to nursery after months of keeping a warm, woolly hat in his bag. (Of course, after wearing the sun hat for a few days, we're back to the knitted pom-pom hat again!) Ian and I have been busy in the house between Spring cleaning and sorting through those cupboards of doom that hide away all sorts of things we no longer need. In the garden, it is time to dream about what we would like to create and to be subsequently frustrated by what we can realistically achieve. Having said that, it is a good excuse to visit garden centres, where we must have a wee cuppa to discuss what we've seen. Spring somehow brings out in us a willingness to embrace change.

In the church calendar, this is a time of change. In our worship, we are journeying with the disciples as they try to process the events that led up to Christ's crucifixion. They are questioning all they thought they knew and are having to rely on faith to sustain them. They are dealing with a lot of powerful emotions: grief, fear, doubts, confusion, and they are all doing so in different ways. Then one by one they realise that Christ has indeed risen and they are astounded. The joy they experience is tinged with anxiety about what the way ahead might be without Jesus leading them onward. It is a huge change to their way of life.

As a church, we find ourselves in the midst of a season of change. On Sunday, we had the opportunity to thank Fiona Bruce for her decade of loyal service as Session Clerk. Stories were shared by Rev. Scott Burton and Tom Morrison,

which spoke of Fiona's utter dedication to the role, which has involved the reading of many edicts and the writing of many grant applications. However, it was her encouragement to move 'forward in faith' during the challenging times that made both of them smile as they said it. It was a lovely afternoon which culminated in a tasty shared meal provided by the Catering Team.

Now we have the opportunity to ensure that our new Session Clerk, Raymond Young, is offered a warm welcome, as he takes on the role in his own way. Just as a new Minister will put their stamp on things, so too should Raymond and I ask that you hold him in prayer.

The big change for me is that I have returned to the fold to be your Minister once more. I am feeling much stronger and am incredibly grateful for the cards, emails and flowers I received during my absence, which offered me so much comfort and encouragement. I look forward to working with the Kirk Session, our congregation and the local community during this season of change, as we consider the way ahead. It is good to journey with the disciples at this particular moment, as they tried to process what had happened and what would happen next. As we do so too, may we always remember Jesus' words of peace and his promise to remain with us always.

Every blessing,

Your Minister,

Fiona



## CHURCH NEWS

### Zoom and You Tube Links for the Sunday services:

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

### You Tube links for Sunday services

We now have an easy to remember link to take you direct to the St Matthew's church YouTube home page as follows:

[youtube.com/@stmatthewspertth](https://youtube.com/@stmatthewspertth) OR

[youtube.com/@stmatthewspertth/streams](https://youtube.com/@stmatthewspertth/streams)

Grateful thanks, as always, to our AV team for their dedication to relaying the services each week.



### The Sacrament of Communion

will be celebrated on  
**Sunday 14th May at 11a.m.**

All who love the Lord are welcome  
at His table.

At the end of the service, there will be an opportunity to donate to support the work of **Christian Aid**.

### Tea and a Blether

I would like to organise a Rota of volunteers again this year to "open the doors" of St Matthew's on Wednesdays, starting on 17th May for the rest of May and throughout June..



If anyone is interested in volunteering to make tea / coffee or give a guided tour of the church on a Wednesday either from 11-1pm or 1-3pm please let me know by **5 May** at the latest.

It is hoped that the popular **Stitch n Chat** sessions will also take place once more on a Wednesday afternoon from 3rd May, so do please take the opportunity to come along and learn a new skill then!

### DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

In addition, I would like to hold a "Tea and Blether" fundraising afternoon for Alzheimer Scotland on **Wednesday 14 June** so please note to come along especially on that date- and watch this space!  
*Fiona Bruce FMBruce6@googlemail.com*



Congratulations to our 'master of music', Michael Ellacott, who celebrated his 60th birthday in church on 16th April; the cake was almost too good to eat (but we did anyway!)

On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, following Sunday worship the congregation had the opportunity to say thank you to Fiona Bruce for her 10 years of faithful service as our Session Clerk.

The Rev. Scott Burton, who had appointed Fiona as Session Clerk, acknowledged the contribution she had made during his time as minister of St Matthew's. He praised her work with the Refurbishment Project and in particular regarding the grant applications which helped to fund that. He also praised her support to him in both work and personal matters, acknowledging that they were neighbours.

Tom Morrison followed, recalling his 11 years of working alongside Fiona in fundraising, and more recently the massive contribution she had made during Covid in producing some 58 e-newsletters which proved valuable in keeping the congregation informed and together.

"I have an edict to read" will be a phrase which will live with Fiona. Since Scott moved to pastures new, an unending stream of Edicts has come from Presbytery, firstly relating to the Vacancy and the special measures that had to be carried out to allow us to move forward with a new minister; more recently, the edicts have related to the Presbytery Mission Plan and its way through the legislative process.

The congregation were thanked for their generous contributions to the gifts that were presented to Fiona—a new pair of walking shoes, a gift token, and a stained glass panel, made by Alan Lewis and designed by Jenni Wilson; this was unveiled by Fiona herself.

The photograph shows Fiona admiring the panel. See also Fiona's letter of thanks on the back page of the newsletter.





## SUMMER EXHIBITIONS

As with last year we are to run **Summer Exhibitions** in St Matthew's from **1<sup>st</sup> July** for 8 weeks showcasing various arts and crafts throughout and welcoming visitors.

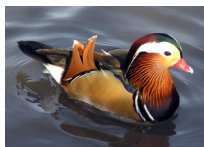
3 people have kindly come forward as volunteers so far so I need another 5 people to organise a week each, to supervise the set up one Saturday from 9am and take down the following Friday from 3-5pm; they will also organise the rota of volunteers offering teas and coffees for that one particular week. (The craftspeople will be present throughout at their particular exhibition).

Can you offer your time on a Saturday and Friday for a few hours to do this? If so, please contact me as below. Thanks

Fiona Bruce FMBruce6@googlemail.com

## St Matthew's Walking Group

After the last walk it was decided not to plan a walk for 6th May to allow those who wish to watch the Coronation to do so.



Instead, we plan to walk on **Saturday 13th May** at Almondbank. The walk is flat and there *may* be a chance to see the Mandarin Duck on the River

Almond. The walk is fairly short and we should end up at the Tickled Trout when we finish.

Meet at Broxden at 9.30 that morning. Please let Jean Young know if you intend to walk. [jy2@btinternet.com](mailto: jy2@btinternet.com) or 07801 889820

**UPCOMING EVENTS 2023**  
ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH, TAY STREET, PERTH.

**APRIL 22** MAMA MIA 2PM

**MAY 07** CORONATION LUNCH 12 NOON

**MAY 26** ABBA FEVER 8PM

**JUNE 03** SUMMER BBQ CLASSIC VEHICLE EXTRAVAGANZA

**JULY AUGUST** SUMMER GALLERY

Fun in the Sun

For more Info please phone 01738 636757

## Perth Prayer Shawl Ministry

Following on from last month's article about Sheena Clark and her knitting prowess, Moira Laing describes Perth churches' Shawl Ministry, which is supported by some of our members

Psalm 139, verse 13, inspires Perth Prayer Shawl Ministry. "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb."

We are "celebrating" 1000 shawls completed..... so far! Little did we realise twelve years ago, a gathering of like-minded folk would pray and provide so much for so many. Our shawl ministry was introduced to us from America in 2010 by a visiting pastoral assistant and the minister's wife from St Leonard's - in -the -Fields church in Perth who welcomed us as a mission group. We come together, monthly, from all faiths to share a time of fellowship, talents—and a cuppa, of course .



Small beginnings saw a project to knit squares which resulted in four blankets being presented to four churches in the city who were hoping to work together. Shawls continue to be our project, but local needs are also being met. An outlet for our work is our two local hospitals providing baby items to Neo-Natal, Maternity and Labour wards. Seafarers in Aberdeen and Edinburgh need hats, scarves and neck-warmers . Our local authorities are delighted with clothes, blankets and soft toys. Annually we provide goods for shoeboxes—allowing us to reach further afield.

We bless all our work before it leaves us with our special prayer. Gifts to cheer, comfort or surprise give us joy. Long may we continue to serve the Lord with wool! "Knitting into the Mystery"

**The Boys Breakfast Blether** continues to be well attended and we are pleased to see some new faces coming along. The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May** in Wetherspoons at 10am and we look forward to seeing you there.

16 people have already expressed an interest in a summer visit to see the Great Tapestry of Scotland in Galashiels. No date has been fixed, but if you are interested, please sign up on the list in church on Sunday.

## The Real Deal



We've all been there – just about to serve up the tea, or dash out to somewhere important, when the phone rings! Someone at the other end of the line is warning us of dire consequences if we don't get our computer fixed (even if you don't own a computer!), or that we're eligible for a free Caribbean holiday or whatever.

The list of telephone 'scams' is getting more varied every day. It never ceases to amaze me what new tricks the scammers will invent to get folks to part with money. In the past, it was only double-glazing sales, or someone asking you to switch your electricity provider. These days the mystery callers have a more sinister agenda. Like me, no doubt you have had them all! They purport to be from reputable companies. If it's not a parcel awaiting delivery from Amazon, or the Post Office (only requiring £1.65 to deliver but will then clean your bank account out!); it might be the severe warning that HMRC is after you for an unpaid tax bill. Even scarier are the ones who pretend to be the police stating that criminals have hacked into your bank account. They tell you that to catch them you are required to move money to another account or withdraw cash to give to a detective or whatever. Recently, it was revealed that some elderly people have fallen for texts from an unknown number claiming to be from their offspring saying their phones have been stolen and they needed money urgently to be paid into a certain account. Beware of them all!

The scammers persistent in their attempts to draw people in and are very convincing. I was recently discussing with some friends how we handled these calls. Most of us just put the phone down. One friend pretends to be interested, but then excuses herself for a moment and leaves the phone off the hook indefinitely, another blows a whistle down the phone at them. As for me, if I haven't put the phone down right away, I sometimes will feign interest and ask if I may ask them a question. They get all excited as they think they are reeling me in. However, bemusement then follows when I ask, "Tell me, how do you sleep at night?", or "How would **you** like someone to do this to your mother?" I suspect that most of them are so thick skinned that nothing will stop them, but I hope maybe I might prick a conscience or two.

Now, how about we play them at their own game. We as Christians have a REAL message to share. Scots Presbyterians are notoriously shy about sharing their faith in public; therefore, we have a perfect opportunity (and a captive audience) to change that. We know that we can offer them a life changing deal. Something that will bring hope, love and peace and is everlasting. So, the next time you answer the phone to a scammer, don't groan, and hang up, smile cheerfully, and say, "no thank you to your offer, but do you know that Jesus loves you and He can change your life for the better and you won't need to do this any more!"

You just never know; your words may just be what that person needs to hear at that time. Either way, I can guarantee that they won't bother you again!

Janet Martin

Dear Lord Jesus

God loves Spring in this wonderful time.

He loves the leaves, pets, love and happiness also lastly joy as well. Which is such a lovely thing and is amazing to spread joy, hope, love and faith which is a nice thing to do. As we welcome back our minister back as we give her our talents too and that's how we are created to be.

Peace be to God  
Amen



There is still time to book your place at the Coronation Lunch on Sunday 7th May. Tickets cost £10—please speak to Tom Morrison on Sunday 30th April.

What you think,  
You become.  
What you feel,  
You attract.  
What you imagine,  
You create. 😊



## Try Laughter Yoga: An Invitation.

At the last meeting of the Guild, I had the pleasure of introducing our lovely members to a session of Laughter Yoga. Many members of our Church Family have asked for more info, so here's a short write up.

Laughter Yoga: at the very least, the term is curious, since these two words aren't usually found side by side. 'Yoga' for many people conjures intimidating images of perfectly athletic, lycra-clad people contorting themselves into endlessly bendy, painful postures. How could this relate to laughter? The truth is, Laughter Yoga couldn't contrast more sharply with the stereotype of yoga. Laughter Yoga can be enjoyed by all ages, abilities, and mobility levels. I myself first encountered it while laid up in bed recovering from an operation. Not only could I not bend, but I couldn't stand, or at times even sit, yet still was able to join in during lockdown.

The practice was invented in 1995 by a medical doctor in India, Dr Madan Kataria. It revolves around treating laughter as yoga. Laughter promotes the very specific deep laughter normally found in yoga: lengthened exhalation and more oxygenated air when breathing in. The word 'yoga' itself means union or connection, and through laughter, we integrate all aspects of life, harmonising with each other at the heart level, therefore without judgement. **The health benefits are well documented and include:** boosting brain function and clearing the mind; reducing pain; reducing stress hormones; alleviating depression; lowering blood pressure; improving the immune system, and more. A friend of mine from Oxford with cystic fibrosis was awaiting a double lung-transplant when she started laughter yoga at the beginning of the pandemic. Two years on, her lung function is now so much better that she's been removed from the list; she no longer needs new lungs.

The underpinning principle is to **laugh for absolutely no reason**. No comedy, or humour is required. And often, it's when we feel at our most grumpy or 'not in the mood' that we can reap the biggest benefits from Laughter Yoga. There's nothing to 'get' or comprehend, meaning that laughter transcends language, physical ability, age, race, gender, background, mental agility. This means that this seemingly light-hearted exercise is actually of profound importance because it uncovers our equality. **The body doesn't know the difference between a genuine belly laugh and 'simulated' laughter:** you enjoy all the attendant health benefits, whether you laugh for real or simply mimic the sounds.

For obvious reasons, then, in your first class or two, **you may feel strange:** practising laughter as an exercise is a pretty unusual thing to be doing. Don't worry if you feel a little self conscious: keep at it, and compare how you felt before a session with how you feel afterwards. The results may pleasantly surprise you, as some of the Guild ladies told me after our session.



If you'd like to find out more about Laughter Yoga, or try a session, please drop me a line on [kyliemurrayphd@gmail.com](mailto:kyliemurrayphd@gmail.com). I'd love to hear from you.  
*Kylie Murray*

### Any unwanted books?

#### Christian Aid can use them!

A major fund-raiser for Christian Aid is the Book Sale held each year in St Andrews and St George's Church in Edinburgh in May. Kinnoull Church member Gerry Watson is much involved in this Book Sale and he is offering to collect any unwanted books—all you need to do is phone him on 07981 181260 and he will call round and pick them up.



The Book sale itself (now in its 51st year!) is held in the church in George Street Edinburgh from Saturday 13th—Friday 19th May and is well worth a trip through to Edinburgh.

**Presbytery Mission Plan news** The Presbytery of Perth will meet to discuss and hopefully approve the revised Presbytery Mission Plan on Tuesday 2nd May at 7p.m. The meeting is being shown on You Tube, and this is the link for those who wish to tune in to it.

<https://youtube.com/live/7qH6Ho-C0oc?feature=share>

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

**Address: Tay Street, Perth, PH1 5LQ**

**Church Tel: 01738 636757**

**Minister: Rev. Fiona C Bullock**

**Tel: 01738 570241**

[fbullock@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:fbullock@churchofscotland.org.uk)

**Session Clerk: Raymond Young**

[rky@btinternet.com](mailto:rky@btinternet.com)

[Clerk@perthstmatthews.org.uk](mailto:Clerk@perthstmatthews.org.uk)

**Church Office: Beverly Skene**

[office@perthstmatthews.org.uk](mailto:office@perthstmatthews.org.uk)

**Newsletter Editor: Marjorie Clark**

[Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com](mailto:Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com)

**Treasurer: John Dewar**

[Dewar34@hotmail.com](mailto:Dewar34@hotmail.com)

**Registered Scottish Charity N0. SCO16829**

**Door Teams for May**

7th Perth City (John Dewar)  
14th Perth South (Malcolm Thom)  
21st Oakbank (Donald Stewart)  
28th Burghmuir (Isobel Sinclair)

**Readers for May**

7th Fiona Bruce  
14th Marjorie Clark  
21st Sheena Beange  
28th Janet Martin

**CHURCH FLOWERS**

May	Donated by	Delivered by
7th	Tom and Lorna Morrison	Marjorie Clark
14th	Ray Simmons	Lesley Williamson
21st	Jack Rough	Tom and Lorna Morrison
28th	Cathy Gray	Alison Sweeney

*A note of thanks from our retiring Session Clerk*

Dear all

I would like to thank everyone for the beautiful stained-glass panel, walking shoes, bouquet of flowers, card and voucher received on Sunday 23 April on the occasion of my "retirement" as Session Clerk.

Thank you too to everyone involved in preparing and serving the lovely lunch and clearing up thereafter!

Thank you also to Rev Fiona Bullock, Rev Scott Burton and Tom Morrison for their kind words.

For me it was a very special occasion which will live long in my memory. Thank You.

Forward in faith

Fiona Bruce

**More dates for your diary:**

St Matthew's is hosting

**Perthshire Art Association's Exhibition**

during the Perth Festival of the Arts.

Saturday 20th May 10a.m.—4 p.m.

Sunday 21st May 1—4 p.m.

Monday 22nd May 10a.m.—4p.m.

Tuesday 23rd May 10a.m.—4p.m.

Last but not least.....a cheery smile from Isobel Sinclair sporting her very stylish Easter bonnet on Easter Sunday



The next issue of the newsletter is due out on Friday 2nd June 2023. (due to the editor's holiday commitments!) All contributions by **Sunday 28th May please** to the editor:

Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com