

Notes from the Vestry Secretary

Vestry Member needed.

Do you have qualities of leadership or know anyone who does?

The Vestry is looking for a new member of the team as a vacancy has arisen. Dorothy Bruce-Gardyne has decided to step down with effect from the AGM on December 11th. It is vital that we find an immediate replacement for her especially at this tricky but interesting period in St. John's history.

A copy of the S.E.C.'s "Responsibilities of the Vestry" can be found on the Church notice board. You will also find proposal forms on the table.

Nominees need to have given their permission for their name to be put forward and have a proposer and seconder. They must be communicant members of the congregation. So do please think prayerfully about this important addition to the management team of the church.

PVG Person: The Vestry is also enormously grateful to Mrs. Maggie Crouch for agreeing to undertake the role of PVG Coordinator.

Christmas Services at St. John's and St. Margaret's Lunanhead

Christmas Eve: There will be no Watch Night service at St John's but we are very welcome to join in the Service at St Mary's Kirriemuir led by their Rector, Revd. Canon Dr. Bob Harley. This begins at 11.30pm.

Christmas Day: It is with great pleasure that we will welcome +David Chillingworth, the Primus for Scotland, to preach on Christmas Day. The Service begins at 10.00am

St Margaret's Lunanhead: There will be no service at St Margaret's on Christmas Eve this year but members are welcome to join the Service at the Lowson Memorial Church in Forfar which begins at 6.30pm.

If you are interested in attending please get in touch with Rev Dr. Karen Fenwick (01307 468585) who will arrange a minibus to take you to Forfar and return you to Lunanhead.

Salvation Army Food Bank

In last month's issue Captain Susan Tidball's Letter thanking the congregation for their contributions to the food bank was printed. My apologies that a very important notice was omitted – her advice as to which food items are most needed. These are itemised below:-

small bags/boxes of teabags, small jars of coffee, small bags of sugar, small bags of pasta, jars, tins or packets of pasta sauce, small boxes or variety boxes of cereal, and UHT milk. At present they have plenty of beans and soups.

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.

ROTAS

DECEMBER 4TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 11: 1 – 10, Romans 15: 4 – 13, Matthew 3: 1 - 12

Reader Michael Hill

Sidesmen Albert Shepherd and Carol Douglas

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 7TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

DECEMBER 11TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

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

Reader Fay Slingsby

Sidesmen Walter Lee and Keith Walker

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

DECEMBER 18TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 7: 10 – 16, Romans 1: 1 – 7, Matthew 1: 18 - 25

Reader Madeline Kingston

Sidesmen David and Pat Green

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21ST

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

DECEMBER 25TH CHRISTMAS DAY

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist - Celebrant the Most Reverend David

Chillingworth.

JANUARY 1ST

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 63: 7 – 9, Hebrews 2: 10 – 18, Matthew 2: 13 - 23

Reader Lee Winks

Sidesmen Albert Shepherd and Carol Douglas

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 4TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

JANUARY 8TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 42: 1 – 9, Acts 10: 34 – 43, Matthew 3: 13 - 17

Reader Nora Craig

Sidesmen Judy Hill and pat Slingsby

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 11TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

JANUARY 15TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 49: 1 – 7, 1 Corinthians 1: 1 – 9, John 1: 29 - 42

Reader Hilary Bridge

Sidesmen Evelyn Balfour and Ian Henderson

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

JANUARY 22ND

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 9: 1 – 4, 1 Corinthians 1: 10 – 18, Matthew 4: 12 - 23

Reader Michael Hill

Sidesmen Walter Lee and Keith Walker

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

JANUARY 29TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Micah 6: 1 – 8, 1 Corinthians 1: 18 – 31, Matthew 5: 1 - 12

Reader Fay Slingsby

Sidesmen David and Pat Green

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 1ST

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

FEBRUARY 5TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 58: 1 – 12, 1 Corinrhians 2: 1 – 16, Matthew 5: 13 - 20

Reader Madeline Kingston

Sidesmen Albert Shepherd and Carol Douglas

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 8TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

FEBRUARY 12TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Deuteronomy 30: 15 – 20. 1 Corinthians 3: 1 – 9, Matthew 5: 21 - 37

Reader Nora Craig

Sidesmen Walter Lee and Keith Walker

Chalice Carol Douglas and Judy Hill

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 15TH

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

FEBRUARY 19TH

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Leviticus 19: 1–2, 9 –18, 1 Corinthians 3: 10 –11, 16 – 23, Matthew 5: 38 - 48

Reader Lee Winks

Sidesmen Evelyn Balfour and Ian Henderson

Chalice Wendy Tyndall and May Williamson

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 22ND

10.15a.m. Said Eucharist

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

Coffee Morning and Craft Sale

Reminder that this is held from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. It includes the usual Craft Stall; Cakes and Produce Stall; Bottle Draw; gift Stall; Tombola Stall (Tombola prizes Gift wrapped please). There is an urgent need for new helpers, particularly for the cake stall. Fay would also be pleased to hear from anyone 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 (this takes place from 9.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. **(PLEASE NOTE NOT IN THE AFTERNOON)**) and the Saturday, either manning stalls or serving coffee, please contact Fay on 01307 818787.

Tuesday Club

13th December	Alaska	The Revd. Dr Jane and Mr Nelson
16th January	A Trip to Argentina	Elaine Henderson
19th February	Carnoustie Traditionals	Disabled Club

F.A.C.T. Dates for your Diary

Sunday 11th December at 6.30pm Salvation Army Band at the Lawson Church

The **Bellshill Salvation Army Band** will again return to the Lawson Church in December for their annual concert, which is in aid of Seema's House, the FACT charity of the year for a second year running.

In the last two years, with funds raised just in Angus and Dundee by local Angus charity Free to Live Trust, Seema and her husband have built a house on their own farm 40 miles from Pune, and the first ten boys have moved in, with a further 30 children to follow.

To remind you, these children are the offspring of trafficked girls sold to brothel operators in Pune. The girls have been told they will be offered good work in the city, but on arrival from their rural villages they find they owe the traffickers an enormous sum of money for their journey which has to be paid back, and that they are trapped into prostitution.

Rescuing their children out of Pune and moving them to the home and school in the country gives these children the opportunity of better health, nutrition, education, and a chance to avoid the inevitable cycle of prostitution.

Seema relies on funding from us to ensure the girls can join the boys at Seema's House and have a chance of betterment.

The concert is always a wonderfully rich mixture of music, in a happy and welcoming atmosphere.

Do come and share the experience on

Sunday 18th December at 7pm.

The **Annual Christmas "Big Sing"** to raise funds for Christian Aid will be held at St Margaret's Church on

Saturday 24th December 6.30p.m. Christingle Service to be hosted by East and Old Parish Church in the Reid Hall to which all congregations are invited.

Note There will be no Christingle service at St. John's this year.

Margaret Cousins and Maggie Crouch, F.A.C.T. Reps.

The Eagle - Mission and Outreach.

When we lived in Dorset we worshipped in a very beautiful twelfth century church where the two huge altar candles often challenged the server's patience! One candle was extremely difficult to snuff out while the other was tricky to light especially if the wick had been crushed down in some way!

Candles and lights galore are appearing in streets and homes all over the world in this season of Advent. This is a time of waiting for light in the darkness, waiting for the promise of God to save his people as well as waiting for the return of our Lord at the end of time.

Jesus once said, *'While I am in the world, I am the light of the world'* [John 9:5.] At another time he challenged his followers to shed that light into the world. *'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden'* [Matthew 5:14.]

That challenge holds true for us today especially as we recognize how spiritually dark the world is becoming. Besides showing us the way and exposing what's in the dark, light is also used to bring comfort, healing, revelation, contact, and security. To be true light-bearers for Christ, we have to allow his light to shine in our lives through his Spirit simply by obeying his teaching.

These old altar candles in Dorset remind me of many folks who have remained 'alight' despite hardship and much pain. Often too that inner light has been used to rekindle many a crushed and hurting soul.

Prayer: Dear Lord, please help me to be so full of your love that I'm able to shine your light wherever you place me.

Hilary Bridge

John Webster has sent two articles for this issue of the magazine – they could hardly be more contrasting!

Gift Aid

Just the usual reminder that anyone who gives regularly to St. John's and pays income tax should sign a declaration so we can claim the tax back from the Inland Revenue. See either myself or Carol.

You should be aware the Gift Aid donation scheme (GADS) which allows us to include cash in the collection in our claim is limited to £1000 per year, so all donations don't necessarily count. It's really better to sign up and get green envelopes or pay by standing order to maximise our refund.

Hedgehogs at the Tuesday Club

Clearly hedgehogs have a great charm, and the subject of a highly popular talk, as two people have felt moved to write about it – John Webster as a delighted guest and the 'official' recorder, Maggie Crouch

Theme of the talk was the serious decline in the numbers of hedgehogs in the UK. Probably down by 4/5ths over the last 50 years and more seriously by 50 percent since 2000. When was the last time you saw Britain's favourite animal?

The reasons for this are varied but the main ones are:-

Intensive farming methods destroying habitat; roadkill; and our obsession with tidy gardens, decking and impenetrable walls and fences.

Mhairi explained that to 'go the whole hog' there is now a project test involving children in Primary Schools in particular and the rest of us in general to try to halt the decline.

Hedgehogs are nocturnal, need about 50 acres to roam about and eat a bit of the things we don't want in our gardens and so they are very useful as well.

Don't feed bread and milk and excessive amounts of slug pellets.

Do feed them in dry weather with water, cereal, meat or fruit.

Get in touch with the Ranger if you want to know more. Any injured or underweight hedgehogs can be taken there –they are in touch with people who care for hedgehogs.

Yet another enjoyable Tuesday Club evening.

And the other take on the same theme.....

On Tuesday 8th November Countryside Ranger Mhairi Kimmet based at Forfar Loch Country Park gave a fascinating talk on Hedgehogs.

The Western European hedgehog is one of 17 species worldwide. It is unmistakable with its specialised coat of 6,000 spines which hangs around the body in a loose-ish “skirt,” concealing the greyish fur on its belly, and surprisingly long legs, and a short tail. Enough space to roll into the defensive ball we all know. As this is how the hedgehog defends itself (it does not have an innate flight response) it becomes very vulnerable to road traffic. Being nocturnal, if we see a hedgehog by day, it is likely to be sick.

There appears to be a 30% decline in the population since 2002, and so there may be fewer than a million hedgehogs left in the UK. Mhairi likened the decline to the same rate as tigers globally – at about 5% a year, both in rural and urban habitats.

Mhairi suggested we have allies in the garden if we have hedgehogs visit us. In fact we have an excuse for a not so tidy garden if we wish to encourage hedgehogs. Untidy areas of longer grass and piles of leaves are suitable places for hedgehogs to hibernate, and provide places which attract nutritious creepy crawlies. She mentioned that children’s trampolines were excellent as no one cuts the grass underneath! Hedgehogs are omnivores. In addition to insects and slugs, research shows they will eat frogs, birds’ eggs, fruit, in a wide diet. If we put out food for hedgehogs it should be unsalted nuts, mealworms, and meat-based dog and cat food. We should not give them milk, rather have dishes of water available.

After sexual maturity is reached in their second year, the noisy “rut” takes place in May and June, with much puffing and snorting as males circle to attract the female’s attention. Mhairi told us you may see circles in your grass if you look for them. Hedgehogs have litters of three to four “hoglets”. The mother will abandon the nest if disturbed, and Mhairi gave us an example of this happening at Lochside. A lady had found a baby hedgehog and brought it to the rangers. After discussion she was able to show them where she had found it, and another two babies were found. There is a lady locally whom the rangers can call on to nurture hedgehogs in her garden and then return them to the wild.

We need to have holes at the bottom of fences to allow hedgehogs, which tend to move in straight lines, to travel from garden to garden. The holes only need to be 13mm square to let the hedgehog through. Replacing gardens with monoblock and hard-standing has greatly reduced their ability to roam in search of food. Unimpeded, hedgehogs can travel a mile at night in search of food, with their “patch” being the size of a golf course.

Mhairi visits schools and encourages children to make homes for hedgehogs from clear plastic boxes. A 13mm opening allows the hedgehog into a prepared area of leaves and food. The hedgehog can be observed without disturbance, and the family can have their “own” hedgehog.

Thanks go to Carol and Liz for the goodies served with tea and coffee. At the next meeting on 13th December we shall be taken on a trip to “Alaska”.
Maggie Crouch

39 DAYS AND MANY MORE STEPS

- 39 days 7 hours and 30 minutes alone - temperatures as low as -51'C - 730 miles
- 1,639,882 steps - 393,125 calories - the equivalent of:
 - 1512 Mars Bars
 - 4914 large eggs
 - 1872 pints of Guinness
 - and a few St John's legendary puddings

These statistics reflect some of the detail that the speaker at our 12th annual Supper and Talk peppered us with during a superb account of, and reflection on his solo, uninterrupted and unsupported trek/ski to the South Pole. Luke Robertson, son of a farming family from near Stonehaven and godson of Maggie Crouch one of our congregation, gave a wonderful illustrated talk which can only be described as inspirational.

Whilst at university Luke suffered a heart problem resulting in being fitted with a permanent pacemaker at the age of 23. In 2014 he required major surgery for a brain

tumour which thankfully proved to be benign. During recovery from surgery he began to devise a plan, foolhardy or inspired depending on your point of view, to reach the South Pole without assistance. He achieved this on 14 January 2016 less than 24 months after undergoing surgery. On touching the South Pole he became the only Scot and youngest Brit to have reached there solo and unsupported.

In 2014 when Luke developed a severe headache, he was treated in hospital in an oncology [cancer] ward although to his great relief it turned out when he had surgery that he did not have cancer. In hospital he met fellow patients whose disease process was harrowing to observe with elation one moment followed by profound deflation the next when the disease recurred worse than it had been before. In spite of often looking at the future down a dark tunnel, Luke's fellow patients showed inspiring resilience to take a step into another unknown after every setback.

Luke has always been an outdoor type and relished challenges such as triathlons and Ironman challenges. As a boy he had been fascinated by the exploits of Antarctic explorers such as Scott, Shackleton and Amundsen. Lying in his hospital bed watching his fellow patients take another step after being floored by a setback, he asked 'Why can I not follow in my heroes' footsteps?'

So, on 5th December 2015 he watched the light aircraft that had flown him to his starting point on Hercules Inlet fly away taking the last human beings that he would see for 39 days. During that time he dragged a sled with initially 130kg [20st.] of supplies over a frozen landscape of sastrugi [ice ridges which can be as high as a person] and avoided crevasses, battled winds up to 100mph and dealt with both auditory and visual hallucinations. He was expending 10,000 calories each day and having anticipated that, had considerably increased his body weight before starting off - how he wished he had known about St. John's puddings then!

He encountered some unexpected hazards; although in the coldest place on earth, some *10,500 miles* from home, the midge still came to bite him. His only consolation was that the Antarctic midge is wingless but it does bite. Because of the cold, his state of the art battery charging equipment could only maintain enough charge to allow him to make the essential once daily position call to confirm that was ok - no facebook/bloggng/tweeting for Luke.

The message that Luke delivered to us was that we are all capable of taking a step beyond what we believe we can achieve. Luke's step was gigantic but following his inspiration, perhaps each of us can take 1 step which when added together make it a gigantic step.

Yet again everyone enjoyed an evening of good food, refreshment and convivial company topped off by hearing a truly inspirational young man.

Thanks are due to the fund raising committee, all the helpers some of whom stepped up to the plate at short notice, those who contributed raffle prizes and puddings and Rev'd Ian Young who said grace.

The magnificent total of £1561.50 was raised and £155 in the Marie Curie collection box. The fund raising committee has agreed to donate £155 from the evening to Marie Curie taking the total donation to £310.

Douglas Burt

"Mind the gap" Dateline – Wednesday 19th October 2016

The faithful mid-week congregation forgathered in the LADY CHAPEL all cosy and warm, but oh!

No locum minister, no reserved sacrament and no advice any would be forthcoming, so what to do?

With foresight, Carol Douglas, the ever present figure at St. John's, had prepared an 'informal' service of prayers and readings appropriate for such an event, interspersing hymns chosen to compliment the spoken words. Included was one of her Mum's favourites (Jean, herself a regular, was absent, being hospitalized that day).

Unaccompanied, the words and music rang out and the service ended with the Blessing and an overall feeling of goodwill –

"We had an hour of peace and reflection
in the middle of our busy week".

Retiring to the Choir Vestry, we enjoyed our warm cuppie and cakes – with a good measure of up-dated gossip!!

Derrick Rose

**THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION (SCOTLAND) REMEMBRANCE SERVICE
IN St. JOHN'S FORFAR SUNDAY Nov 13th 2016
CELEBRATED BY BISHOP LUSCOMBE & THE VEN. IAN YOUNG**

What a lovely Remembrance Sunday it was. Bishop Luscombe, a Second World War veteran, wearing bishop's robes and a splendid row of medals, and The Ven. Ian Young were the celebrants and designers of this magnificent and touching service.

St. John's lends itself so wonderfully to such occasions and packed with a congregation headed by our Lord Lieutenant, Councillors, representatives of HM armed forces, ex-service personnel, Cadets and the Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Beavers; the excellently chosen hymns were sung with obvious pleasure and sincerity. As the Standard Bearers from the Legion presented the standards to be placed on the altar for the duration of the service, Bruce and Sandy, from our own congregation, placed poppy wreaths at the First & Second World War Memorial corners.

Col. Nicholas Prescott delivered the traditional words "They shall not grow old as we who are left grow old....." and the Kohima Epitaph.

The Bishop's address reminded us that the suffering of war goes on to this very day and that war is a tragic waste of life and human resources. War brings out the very worst that humans can be, as the awful atrocities being currently committed in Syria show us. Yet it brings out the very best, as we heard in the second reading by Dorothy, in the words: *'greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends'*. He told us that, as so many of those who served and survived, he at 19 and lying in a military hospital bed seriously wondered if he would make his 20th birthday. Last week he celebrated his 92nd and today remembers those who gave him 72 years of *'tomorrows'*.

After the intercessions and The Lords Prayer we had a short time for personal prayer and reflection whilst we were given a wonderful mini Recital by Neil and Geoffrey (oboe).

Many generations from tiny infants to people in their nineties were present and we all, I suspect, have something in common; as it is said, and I'm sure it's true, no family in the country did not lose loved ones in the carnage of the Great War. And of course, this being the centenary year of the Battle of the Somme, it is of particular significance to this area.

What a splendid and touching service. Many thanks to +Ted & Ian and all who assisted them.

Pat and Fay Slingsby

The Inquisitive Mind of a Child

Why are they selling poppies, Mummy?

Selling Poppies in town today

The poppies, child, are flowers of love

For the men that marched away

But why have they chosen a poppy Mummy?

Why not a beautiful rose?

Because, my child, men fought and died

In the fields where the poppies grow

But why are the poppies so red Mummy?

Why are the poppies so red?

Red is the colour of blood, my child

The blood our soldiers shed

The heart of the poppy is black, Mummy

Why does it have to be black?

Black, my child, is the symbol of grief

For the men who never came back

But, why Mummy, are you crying so?

Your tears are giving you pain

My tears are my fears for you my child

For the world is – FORGETTING AGAIN!

(A slightly feminist take on the Christmas story?)

Three Wise women

Asked directions,

Arrived on time,

Would have cleaned the stable

Helped deliver the baby,

Made a casserole

Brought practical gifts

And there would be

PEACE ON EARTH

The congregational Christmas card is enclosed with this magazine, with the good wishes for Christmas, the New Year and beyond.

Advertisement

Salon dMb

Dawn would like to offer
you good quality haircutting,
colours , perms etc. at a
reasonable price

Tel. 01307 248100

A Politically Corrected Version Of The Lord's Prayer

Our universal chairperson in outer space, your identity enjoys the highest rating on a prioritized selectivity scale. May your sphere of influence take on reality parameters; may your mindset be implemented on this planet as in outer space. Allot to us, at this point in time and on a per diem basis, a sufficient and balanced dietary food intake, and rationalize a disclaimer against our negative feedback; as we rationalize a disclaimer against the negative feedback of others. And deprogram our negative potentialities, but desensitize the impact of the counter-productive force. For yours is the dominant sphere of influence, the ultimate capability, and the highest qualitative analysis rating, at this point in time and extending beyond a limited time-frame. End of message.

Sir Walter Raleigh

Disturb us, Lord, when
We are too pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true
Because we dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when
with the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst
For the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wilder seas
Where storms will show Your mastery;
Where losing sight of land,
We shall find the stars.
We ask you to push back
The horizons of our hopes;
And to push back the future
In strength, courage, hope, and love.
This we ask in the name of our Captain,

Smiling is infectious
Spike Milligan

You catch it like the flu
When someone smiled at me today
I started smiling too
I walk around the corner
And someone saw me grin
When he smiled I realised
I had passed it on to him.
I thought about the smile
And then realised its worth
A Single smile like mine
Could travel round the earth
So if you feel a smile begin
Don't leave it undetected
Start an epidemic
And get the world infected

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS IN VERSE

**Aspects of the season across the
centuries**

John Betjeman 1906-1984)

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around these tissueed fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,
No love that in a family dwells
No carolling oin frosty air
Nor all the steeple shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare –
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in bread and wine.

Richard Crashaw 1612 - 1649

Welcome, all wonders in one sight!
Eternity shut in a span,
Summer in winter, day in night,
Heaven in earth and God in Man,
Great little one! Whose all embracing
birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to
earth.