



Holiday Club Success

As Elaine and Martin think back on their time in Arbroath, the thirty holiday clubs that they've led rank high on the list of great memories!

This year, the club was entitled 'Guardians of Ancora' and it was received as enthusiastically as ever by the many children who attended. The vast majority of those who came have no background in church and yet they got hold of the Bible stories really quickly and went away with a working knowledge of what it is to be a friend of Jesus.



(Continued on page 4.)

No shortage of adults and young people prepared to enter into the spirit of things!



Easter 2016 - See article on page 3.)



CHURCH OFFICE : 431135

ADMINISTRATOR

Linda Hunter

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri : 9 -12noon

MINISTER

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Margaret McIntosh : 876993

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BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER

Linda Hunter : 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH

Parish Records

April 2016

Baptisms and Blessings - Riley, son of Jordan and Natasha

Weddings - None

Funerals - Gordon Lodge

Look Out For The Scammers!

Alan McSkimming has received a letter from a bogus 'lawyer' in Gambia indicating that he has fallen heir to 8.5 million dollars! Don't all rush to befriend him!

**Service Core Group
ECO TIPS**

Hang dry

Get a clothesline or rack to dry your clothes by the air. Your wardrobe will maintain colour and fit, and you'll save money. Your favourite t-shirt will last longer too.

IMPORTANT DATES

JUNE EDITION

Handwritten articles should be handed in to the **office** by the **first** date and **not** to the Editor.

Word Processed files, as attachments, can be sent **directly to the Editor** or **via office** by **second** date.

Please **avoid** embedding articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.

Friday 20th May (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 24th May (Word-Processed file)

Eagle-Eyed Readers?

You may have spotted that last month's Quest had extra blank lines at the end of articles. It did not go to our printers like that but, unfortunately, a software update at their end caused this.

We are trying to find ways round this and I wonder if it will have worked for this edition! (Editor)

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Organisations will alert members when groups resume after holidays or when changes to venues are made.

SUNDAY

10.15 am – Gathering for prayer.

10.30 am – Choir practice.

11.00 am – Morning service (with short communion on the third Sunday of each month. Tea/coffee after. Creche – up to age 3. Infants – ages 3 to 5. Juniors – ages 8 and 9. Seniors – ages 10 and 11 Sunday Club – Elaine Fair (873238). Teen Scene – S1 to S2

7.30 to 9.00 pm – Youth Group

Monday to Friday - 12.00 – Havilah : Drop-in Centre – Community Spirit (434088)

MONDAY

2.00 pm – Dorothy Dobson Over 50s Exercise Class

6.00 pm – Rainbow Guides – L Hadden (875379)

7.30 pm – St Andrew's Guild : Fortnightly – Shona Kemp (878526)

7.30 pm – Flower Club : Fortnightly – M McIntosh (876993)

WEDNESDAY

10.30 am – Midweek Meeting Point – M Fair (873238)

6.15 pm – Brownies – Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Guides - Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

THURSDAY

10.00 am – Parent and Toddler Group – M Laidlaw (07840 966438)

2.00 pm – Friends Club : first Thursdays – N Watson – B Gerrard, secretary (552727)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

6.00 pm – BB Junior Section – W Ewart (876114)

7.30 pm – BB Company Section – M Clark (437758)

FRIDAY

9.30 am – Coffee morning

Intimations, changes of address, hall bookings etc., please contact the Church office, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon and for 15 minutes after Sunday Service, telephone 431135.

Martin Fair

May 2016

Dear Friends,

During this season, between Easter and the summer, our Sunday mornings are going to be given over to a consideration of what are commonly called the 'Seven Last Words of Jesus from the Cross.'

A close examination of the four gospels reveals these seven sayings, each one uttered as Jesus hung during the hours of darkness on the day of crucifixion. None of the seven is contained in any one gospel and some are to be found only in one. They are all well attested in the early church though and it would seem that the first followers of Jesus considered them to be of the highest importance and worthy of remembering and meditating upon.

Even so, it was much more recently – some three hundred years ago – that the sayings worked their way into a form that became widely used from that time on. It was following a devastating earthquake in Peru that a Jesuit monk composed a Good Friday service that focussed on the Seven Sayings. Thereafter, that service became accepted across much of the Roman Catholic Church.

Here's the thing; in more recent times, the different branches of the universal Church have come to see that there is much that can be learned from each part of the whole. At one time it would have been almost unthinkable for a Presbyterian Church such as ours to, for example, employ candles and incense in worship and yet those who came to our Lenten services found these very things as part of the services!

Happily, therefore, many other churches have now borrowed from our Catholic brothers and sisters and are giving attention to such as the Seven Last Words from the Cross and other similar devotions. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church has become much more open to some of what has traditionally been emphasised in the Protestant Church. This is all to the good, surely.

I encourage you therefore to give your full attention to this series (which will have started by the time you're reading this.) Engage your heart and mind in a full consideration of each of these sayings of Jesus and allow them to lead you further into an adoration of and devotion to Christ.

With every blessing,

Martin and Elaine and family (inc. Flossie!)

mfair@churchofscotland.org.uk

Easter 2016

When it comes to a journey, the getting there is just as important as the arriving. So it is with Easter, that the journey through Lent is a vital part of the whole Easter experience. By way of making that clearer, this year we offered weekly Lenten services which were arranged in the style of the Taize community. These short Wednesday evening services were appreciated by all who attended, not least for the meditative Taize music and the beautiful candle lit front-pieces that Jim McLeod arranged. Those Lent services paved the way perfectly for our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship times which, in turn, helped all who attended to be ready for Easter Sunday itself.

The 'Big Day' began as always with an 8am service at the Abbey which was shared in with members from Old &

Abbey, the Town Mission and the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army always brighten up proceedings and it was no different on this occasion!

Our 11am service saw our sanctuary packed close to capacity and who among those who were there will readily forget the dramatic beginning to the service! The 25ft tall cross that had been specially made (thanks, Linda Hunter) was slowly raised by the wire pulley system (thanks, Ken Miller) and what had resembled folded grave clothes became the brilliant white empty cross of Easter morning!

The evening service was led by the full praise band and proved to be the perfect ending to what had been from the start a great day.

Ask Theophilus

Question :

I was out for a meal with friends recently. Another person present, when offered a drink, declined, saying he was a 'Rechabite'. Someone asked what that meant. He pointed to me: 'He's a church person, he'll tell you.' I hadn't a clue! So what is a Rechabite?

Theophilus answers :

Though not true Israelites, the clan of a man called Rechab lived among the chosen people in ancient Palestine. Rechab's son, Jonadab (who lived a few generations after King David), saw how the former slaves were adopting the depraved ways of Canaanite tribes, and engaging in their idolatry. So Jonadab gave his tribe the command not to live in the cities in Judah, nor to plant vineyards, nor to till the soil, but to live as nomads in tents, pasturing sheep; also they were to abstain from all alcoholic drink.

Three hundred years later in 586BC Nebuchadnezzar

was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah was preaching fiery sermons on the impending judgment of God about to fall on the city on account of their idolatry and unfaithfulness to the covenant. The Rechabites had just moved into the walled city to protect themselves and their flocks from the marauding Babylonian armies; they still adhered to the commands that their forefather had given their clan 300 years earlier, including the vow of total abstinence.

Therefore in one of his sermons Jeremiah took them as an example of faithfulness to a hard and rigid rule of life, and contrasted their steadfast fidelity with the profligate infidelity of God's people, who had totally rejected the wise and loving commandments of their gracious Redeemer.

The story is found in Jeremiah 35, where in the final verse this clan is promised the future blessing of God, in vivid contrast to the awesome judgment about to fall on Judah and Jerusalem; the Jews would soon be carried off into exile in faraway Babylon.

Today some total abstainers still call themselves 'Rechabites'. There's your answer!

Holiday Club (Continued from page 1)

What a great team we have for running these clubs! Between adults and teens, the team comprises some 25 willing workers – and they are backed up by a kitchen team and various others who do things in the background. A special mention to Gaynor Scott who puts a power of work in by way of preparing all of the craft activities that the children engage in throughout the week.

The bottom line is that without this team there would be no club and when you bear in mind that some of them take

a week of their holidays to be part of it – and many of our teachers who work with children every other week of the year and who could therefore be forgiven for enjoying some 'time off!' come along too – you appreciate the level of commitment involved.

This year, Martin, who ordinarily leads these holiday club weeks, had to duck out early to take care of some other pressing matters on two of the days. It's further testimony to the team that they picked up exactly where he left off and proved themselves more than capable of meeting the challenge.

A GREAT BIG well done to all.

Youth Work Update

This month I am planning Popcorn & Cake with Gavin Berry from Old & Abbey Church. Our intention is to have nine schools and seven churches involved from across Arbroath and the surrounding villages. This year the event will be run across two weeks, Tuesday 31st May – Thursday 9th June, due to the level of interest shown by head teachers and their schools. This reflects the high standard of work the churches in Arbroath have delivered through Easter Code and Bubblegum & Fluff. I am excited at the prospect of sharing the story of Pentecost with so many young people but I cannot do it alone. If you are able to be involved in any way, whether by praying for us or taking part in the daily activities, please come and have a chat with me.

As for youth group, to finish off our series on World Issues we are taking part in the Backpack Appeal, which was created by myself and other youth reps from the National Youth Assembly. This involves filling school bags with items such as, notebooks, stationary, water bottles,

hats and gloves, in order to send them to St. Andrew's Refugee Services in Cairo, Egypt. StARS, amongst other things, support refugee children into education and so we are doing our bit. If you'd like to know more, or make up a backpack yourself, please speak to me.

Finally, we have recently increased in numbers due to several P7s joining us after attending Holiday Club! The volunteers and I will be guiding youth group through a new programme, into the summer, called Handling Emotions. We feel it is important for our young people to be informed about the best ways to deal with feelings, such as grief, fear and anger, even if they are not directly experiencing them just now. By equipping them in this way, we hope to prepare them for the future and point them to the God who can help them through any situation.

Blessings,

Adele Marr
Youth Worker

7th Arbroath B.B.

We are coming to the end of our year and as I write this it seems we still have a chill in the air. We have our annual outing on 30th of April when we will be going to Edin-

burgh. Our display night is on Thursday the 5th of May at 7pm in the church. A warm welcome to all church friends to attend our 55th Display and Awards night. A full report of the night will be in the next Quest.

Captain Wilma H. Ewart

Website and Social Media

At its most recent meeting, the Kirk Session decided that spending around £1,600 annually on putting weekly ads in the Arbroath Herald is no longer a good use of our resources. On most weeks, that ad didn't say much more than that there was a coffee morning on Friday and services on Sunday. Here's the thing; our members already know that!! and those from outwith who look for information about the congregation generally do so by looking at our website and by 'liking' our Facebook page. That's the way of the world.

The good news is that we have a well-developed website which includes up-to-date information about what's happening and which hosts our live stream and our catch-up media service. In other words, those who watch our services online reach us by way of our website – not something that can readily be done by buying the local paper!

As for our Facebook page, as churches go it attracts an unusually high amount of traffic. Almost 600 people have

'liked' our page meaning that whenever we post some information about upcoming events or a report on something that's happened, all these people are immediately brought 'up to speed.' But social media allows that such posts can go further still. For instance, when we posted some news and photos of our recent holiday club, nearly 1,400 people were reached. It's nothing other than the further and ongoing 'digitisation' of our world.

Regarding our website, might we make the following plea? It requires a lot of work to keep it up to date. Matthew, one of our Vocations Volunteers, has recently gone through it all in detail and has found much that is out of date! The front page material is maintained on a weekly basis but some of the other material is looked at less often and so can become dated quite quickly. We're about to engage in a 'bringing it up to date' exercise but we'd be much helped in this if those of you who visit our website would notify us whenever you find material that needs updated. Thank you, in anticipation.

GUILD NEWS

By the time this magazine is in print we will have come to the end of another busy year in the Guild. Thanks to all our members and friends who helped us throughout the year. Thank you to our minister, Martin, for his words of encouragement and help through the year and also to Janis Clark our Church officer.

This article is full of thank yous - but they are most sincerely meant.

Just to say thank you to everyone who contributed to the great total of £781.94 raised through the Church box collection. We much appreciate the work of Joyce McPherson the box convenor.

Ladies, enjoy the break from the Guild for a couple of months - come back refreshed and enthusiastic. Always remembering -

"Whose we are and whom we serve"

Vocations Volunteers

It doesn't seem that long ago that the pages of QUEST were speaking of the imminent arrival of three young people who were about to arrive among us as part of a new Church of Scotland programme intended to offer young adults a gap year opportunity to explore a life of service within the church.

Well here's the bad news; their time among us is fast running out! Amy, Chris and Matthew have endeared themselves to us and in some ways it feels as if they've always been among us! From the beginning, they threw themselves into the life of both congregation and community. Nothing that was asked of them was too much and even when asked to step out beyond their comfort zones, they were ready to do so – and have, as a result, found themselves with much expanded horizons. They will leave us at the end of June but will always be considered honorary members of St. Andrew's, Arbroath, welcome back at any time.

As to their own futures, Chris will be returning to the USA to take up studies for the ministry at the prestigious Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey (from which Martin gained his Doctor of Ministry degree.) Matthew has just entered the Discernment Process of the Church of Scotland which is the 'front door' for those who want to make a serious consideration of what form of ministry might suit them best. Amy, the youngest of the three, has turned 18 during her time here and upon finishing will return to Edinburgh to look for work and, as with Matthew, to consider further what God might be calling her to.

But even as we prepare to say goodbye to these three at the end of June, our focus is on who will come to take up their places? The worrying news is that, to date, we have no guarantee of whether or not we will have volunteers at all next year. This would be a real blow and when combined with Stuart's departure would see us stretched to the limit. Please pray about this matter, specifically that young Scots would be motivated to respond to the advertising campaign and would consider coming to Arbroath next year to take up a volunteering role with us.

‘Thumbs Up’ for our Guild

As is normally the case, I attended the AGM of our Guild on Monday evening of 18th April and was delighted to do so. AGMs don't usually set the heather on fire – just routine business getting done. But there was much that was of interest in this one as far as I was concerned.

The hymn we sang had been composed by Guild member, Margaret McGill; it was to the tune from ‘Praise my soul, the King of Heaven’ and was excellent. Karen Gammie led in prayer and did so beautifully. There was a line in her prayer which particularly struck me; it was a petition for an ‘epidemic of brotherly love’ to spread across the globe! Amen, to that.

The various reports of the evening outlined much of what the Guild had been in-

involved in throughout the year, not least their fundraising for the Guild Projects, which every Guild branch works towards. Our ladies do a fantastic job in this regard and in supporting these various projects, they prove themselves to be a thoroughly relevant and, importantly, 21st Century organisation.

Our Guild is fortunate in having a greater range of ages in its membership than is the case in most branches. I'm sure that's in no small part because, alongside the serious work of serving, this group of women know how to have fun and enjoy themselves!

Long live the Guild. May God bless them in all that they do in the name of Christ.

Social Attitudes Survey Scotland

QUEST readers might have noticed reports of the most recent Social Attitudes Survey in recent media coverage. Among other things, this survey highlighted trends in religious belief and behaviour. Most notably, but perhaps not surprisingly, it would seem that less than half of Scots now consider themselves to be ‘Christian.’ It's been a long time since large numbers of Scots attended church but most still reckoned themselves to be ‘Christian’ in one way or another. No longer.

But is this as bad news as first it sounds? It could be argued that we have a much more honest understanding of the reality than has previously been the case. And isn't it a good thing for Christian faith to be more precisely defined – in other words, for people to be clear about whether or not they are Christian! Was it ever a good thing for people to consider themselves to be ‘kind of’ Christian!!?

While there is obvious decline in this age, we should be reluctant to overstate the loss of impact of the Church in Scotland. The convener of the Church of Scotland's Mission and Discipleship Council, Rev Colin Sinclair, had this to say about the report:

"When I was young "mission" seemed to begin at the far end of the Mediterranean. What this survey highlights is that mission is now at our doorstep. We welcome the opportunity and challenge of sharing our Christian faith in ways that are relevant to people living in Scotland today.

"We do not minimise the challenges we face, yet what the statistics actually show is that one in five people in Scotland do feel connected to the Kirk.

Being aware of the secularisation of our society we are developing fresh expressions of church alongside traditional

forms in order to engage with people. These are often more informal and relational and they are set in contexts in which people feel on their home ground and therefore in a safe place.

We have set up some pioneer ministries that will work in our communities to help us learn lessons that will shape the whole church. We have published a resource "Exploring Faith" to explain what our faith is and why it matters.

We have contacted those who have stopped attending church but want to hang on to their Christian Faith. We want to hear their stories and understand the lessons we can learn from them.

How encouraging that faced with this survey we can report the highest number for nine years of new ministers coming into our church.

It is only when it becomes "unfashionable" to have faith that we find out for ourselves the true value and meaning of a gospel centred on Jesus Christ that transforms lives and communities."

LOOKING AHEAD

MAY

Sunday 1

9.30 am - Traditional Worship
11 am - Worship Service;
including services of
Baptism and Infant Blessing
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 8

11 am - Worship Service
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 15

11 am - Worship Service;
Main service followed by
short Communion
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 22

10.30 am - Worship service;
NB. Early start to allow for
departure to Heart and Soul
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 29

11 am - Worship Service;
with guest preacher,
Chick Lidstone
(Workplace Chaplaincy)
6.30 pm - Evening Worship
4pm - Messy Church

JUNE

Sunday 5

9.30 am - Traditional Worship
11 am - Worship Service,
including service of
Infant Baptism
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 12

11 am - Worship Service; with
guest preacher David Searle
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 19

11 am - Worship Service
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 26

11 am - Worship Service for
all the family,
including prize-giving
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

N.B. As well as the services
above there is a 40 minute
service every Wednesday
morning at 10.30 am.

Words that Speak to Me

by Joyce Reid

Favourite piece of scripture, song or hymn?

Will you come and follow me?

Particular lines or verse that speak to me:

Without a shadow of a doubt “and do such as this unseen” –

not looking for recognition or reward.

Why this is significant to me:

I love the challenges in this hymn:

Will you leave yourself behind

Will you risk the hostile stare

Will you quell the fear inside

(will you) never be the same

But also the re-assurance that God will help me and we'll do it together.

Clerk's Corner

A new use of our premises

The variety of lets we have for our premises is quite wide, but the request from the Blood Transfusion Service to look at the facilities we offer was one of the most unusual ones. A visit from one of the officials resulted in a very favourable response and we have now had a booking for three sessions in 2016. The first of these has already taken place and it was a very interesting experience to see how well-oiled the organisation of such an event is.

Twenty five staff in a bus and their equipment in a lorry arrived an hour before the session was due to start. The sanctuary, our biggest area available had been cleared of most of the chairs and within minutes, beds had been wheeled in, computers to deal with the administration, welcome signs, and chocolate biscuits for the post-donation recovery time.

A queue of those wishing to donate their blood soon formed. Some were very regular donators, and others were doing this for the first time, and there were some well-known St Andrew's faces among them.

Throughout the day the staff commented on how comfortable they were and how warm the sanctuary was. This may have meant that the veins were nice and open and easy to get the needle in!

We welcomed some former members of St Andrew's – one in particular who had been in the BBs as a youngster. He had not been in the building since the refurbishment and was amazed to see the difference. He stayed chatting to the stewards for quite some time, reminiscing about former BB officers. One other member said he found it odd to be lying down in what he described as the 'wrong' way with his feet facing the door and the pulpit behind him!

One of the anxieties we had in accepting this booking was in the requirement that parking space outside the

church was available for the bus and the lorry. In some hope and trepidation, bollards were placed outside on the required space the night before with a note asking drivers if they could respect our need to have the space reserved for such an important service. We need not have worried – on all three days the space required was left empty for us.

Our stewards were on duty in spells throughout the day and again enjoyed all the compliments about the beauty of our building. We never tire of hearing this.

Now a plea for the Events Team

We do try not to overburden anyone on the team nor ask anyone to be on duty for too long. As we had several other bookings in the first three months of 2016, the need for stewards was high. What does being a steward mean? It could mean as little as being in the gallery area to welcome people as they arrive, directing them to where they have to go and just being a welcoming face. Sometimes, just being there is all that is needed and so you will see stewards reading a book or even knitting. (For concerts in can be necessary to be on duty for the whole time, but we do have a dedicated group who do this – and they get a free ticket to whatever is on!)

Is this something that you could do? Ask at the office for more details and if you could only help now and again that would be fine.

And now here is the detail of a conference being held in Dundee on 18th June 2016 10.00-15.45

The Mission and Discipleship Council is holding the 10th in a series of regional events, featuring inspiring speakers, practical ideas and useful resources for your congregation. Choose from a range of workshops: Sharing Faith; Who is my Neighbour? ; Elders' Visits, Finding Funding; Preparing for Young People. The event is free, but registration is required for catering purposes and places are limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

Please register online at www.resourcingmission.org.uk/ events no later than 10th June.

Heart & Soul

As over the last four years, we will be running a bus to the Church of Scotland's annual 'Heart & Soul' event. It takes place in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, from 1-6pm on Sunday 22nd May. To allow for a timely departure

to Edinburgh, our morning service on that day will commence at 10.30am.

Bookings for the bus can be made at the Church Office anytime from the beginning of April.

Visit www.heartandsoul.org.uk for full details.



More in pictures

Left - Joyce Reid (story on page 7)

Right and below - Holiday Club and Easter



Above - Kitchen volunteers - and semolina 'gunged'



Above - Martin in two very different guises !!!



Below - Morning and evening Easter worship

