



## The Easter Narrative

There's so much of the Easter narrative that quickens my spirit - or leaves me heavy hearted.

I shrivel with shame to think of how I've denied my Lord and shrink at the thought of Him looking straight at me; *'The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.'*

Deep down, I fear that I might have fled with the other disciples when they came to arrest Him; *'Then all his disciples deserted him and ran away.'* And I'm not at all confident that I wouldn't have joined the mob; *'But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"'*

And I don't suppose there's much chance that I'd have lingered at the cross in those final moments; *'Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene.'*

But imagine having been with Him on THAT day as the crowds welcomed Him and spread their cloaks and branches before Him?

Imagine having been there on THAT evening at the meal when he broke bread and poured wine and washed feet?

And imagine having been there on THAT morning when the women came bursting into the room to tell that the tomb was empty? Imagine.

But the part of the drama that excites me most describes what, according to Luke, happened on the afternoon and evening of Resurrection Day. We're told that two of His followers - Cleopas is the only one named - were on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus and that they were discussing together *'everything that had happened.'*

Their response to the One who drew alongside them as they walked makes it clear that the *'everything that had happened'* refers directly to what had happened to their Lord. And though they had probably heard the report of the empty tomb, it seems clear enough that they were heavy-hearted and not at all convinced of the veracity of the report. They were defeated, despondent, dejected, downcast. Take your pick.

Even so, as they neared their destination they asked that their travelling companion stay with them, for darkness was falling. It was late in the day so certainly it would have been. Little did they know that light was about to break in. Here's what Luke tells us; *'So He went in to stay with them. While He was reclining at the table with them, He took bread, spoke a blessing and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognised Jesus—and He disappeared from their sight.'*

As He broke bread and blessed it, and gave it to them, their eyes were opened. Like Paul's following the laying on of hands post-Damascus Road.

And then He was gone. But they knew it had been Him.

Jesus.

Did they suspect? Was it a hunch, an educated guess? No, they knew, for their hearts burned within them. And with that, despite the lateness of the hour that had, a short time earlier, so concerned them, they started out back to Jerusalem. And finding the other believers, *'the two told what had happened on the road, and how they had recognised Jesus in the breaking of the bread.'*

The account is dear to me for all kinds of reasons, but I'll mention two.

Firstly, I've been to Emmaus and with the party that I'd taken on pilgrimage, I celebrated Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper. Never was it more special. If I never have opportunity to return to that place and even if I never have opportunity to share the sacrament of bread and wine again, I'll treasure that moment.

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**CHURCH OFFICE: 431135****ADMINISTRATOR**

Linda Hunter: 431135

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

**MINISTER**Rev Dr W Martin Fair, BA, BD  
07889 982 216**PASTORAL ASSISTANT**

Ian Gray: 01674 677126

**CLERK TEAM LEADER**

Joan Hainsworth: 875409

**TREASURER**

Pending

**CHURCH OFFICER**

Janis Clark: 878594

**YOUTH WORKER**

Carla Ingram: 07931 420 905

**HAVILAH PROJECT  
LEADER**

Tracey McLeod: 434088

**HAVILAH PROJECT  
WORKER**

Tammy Stuart: 434088

**HAVILAH SUPPORT  
WORKER**

Karen Reaney: 01307 818277

**FABRIC CONVENOR**

Pending

**SUNDAY CLUB**

Elaine Fair: 873238

**FREEWILL ENVELOPES**

Linda Hunter: 431135

**SAFEGUARDING**Eleanor Jakobsen:  
01382 477318**FLOWER CONVENOR**

Margaret McIntosh: 553160

**PRAYER PROMOTERS**Judy Spink: 872395  
Anne Matthew: 876008**SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR**

Janis Clark: 878594

**BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER**

Linda Hunter: 431135

**MAGAZINE EDITOR**

Ken Miller: 875235

Quest@arbroathstandrews.org.uk

**ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH****Member Records****March 2021****Baptisms and Blessings** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - Jackie Carnegie**IMPORTANT DATE****MAY EDITION****Word Processed files, as attachments, should be  
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Secondly, on an Easter evening in the mid-nineties, the Emmaus Road account came to life for me in a very special way. The week leading up to Easter had been as hectic as ever; a holiday club for local children every morning and worship services every evening. And three funerals for good measure. I'd got the 8am Sunrise Service organised and so too the 11am Family Celebration. But I just hadn't had time to prepare a sermon for the evening service.

And I was panicking. Before that, I'd always relied on a word for word script for my preaching. Going down to the church that evening, I was in a cold sweat. I was going to have to stand in front of a big congregation without a word in front of me and I wasn't at all confident that when I opened my mouth anything would come out! What could I do but offer a quick-fire prayer and hope for the best?

And then it happened. I started to preach and the words flowed. And flowed and flowed. I'll never forget the joy of the moment and the sense of freedom and of being really alive. It was as if a fire was burning within me. I could do no other than talk about Jesus, proclaiming Him to be alive.

My preaching was never the same again. There was a new confidence, a sure sense that I had found the 'me' within me, the person I was meant to be. What joy!

The passage I preached through that evening? Luke 24:13-35. The Road to Emmaus.

I love that we're not told the name of the second of the two travellers. There's plenty of speculation as to who it might have been, but no one can say for sure. I like that because it makes it easier for me to imagine that I'm the other person. I can imagine walking and being joined by Jesus and having Him explain the scriptures to me. I'd ask Him about all those difficult passages! And I can imagine sitting with Him at the table and having Him offer a blessing and then breaking the bread.

Are you ready to be surprised by Jesus showing up? And as you break bread, do you long to have your eyes opened and to seeing like you've never seen before? Do you long to have that fire burning within you?

Jesus.

And in all of this might there be hope for the Church to become what we're meant to be?

A gathering of those who travel with Jesus.

A gathering of those who share table fellowship with Jesus at the centre.

A gathering of those who are so transformed by having met Jesus that they can do no other than declare Him to be alive.

A gathering of those no longer in retreat but heading back to Jerusalem, the site of cross and tomb.

A gathering of those who will walk with others that they too might come to encounter this Jesus.

A gathering of those who in offering hospitality discover Jesus among them.

When we can all meet again, and until then on Zoom, I'd love to hear about what parts of the Easter story excite you.

May the blessing of the Risen Lord be yours.

May He set a fire in your soul that you can't contain and can't control.

Jesus.

**Martin Fair**

## Treasurer & Financial Administrative Support St Andrew's Church Arbroath

The role of Church Treasurer Arbroath at St Andrew's has been vacant since October 2020. Discussions have taken place at both the Finance and Admin Core Group and at Kirk Session with a view to identifying someone who would be willing to take on the role. However, these discussions have not led to a new treasurer being identified.

Over the months since October 2020, the duties have been covered by three of the church Finance and administration Core Group. This period has provided an opportunity to assess options for the future in relation to the role and associated responsibilities. As a result of this assessment, and with the approval of Kirk Session, it has been decided that part of the way forward is to appoint a firm of accountants to support the production of monthly reconciliations and month-end reports, and the production of final year-end

accounts, including independent examination.

Engaging the professional accountancy services will remove substantive burdens in relation to maintaining financial records, financial reporting and, by working on a month-by-month basis, the production of year-end accounts will be much simplified.

We still however, require a church treasurer and potentially, depending on the extent of duties a new treasurer would be prepared to undertake, additional administrative support to assist the treasurer.

If you are interested in discussing these opportunities, or know of someone who would be, please contact Joan Hainsworth, our Session Clerk at Arbroath St Andrew's (sessionclerk@arbroathstandrews.org.uk), or Scott Anderson, Finance and Administration Core Group Leader (finance@arbroathstandrews.org.uk).

Kind Regards,

Joan & Scott

## Theophilus

### The Second Commandment

**You shall not make a graven image for yourself.**

(Exodus 20:4)

**They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever! Amen.** (Romans 1:25)

The First Commandment is about worshipping false gods; the Second Commandment is about worshipping the true God in a false way. One of the great failings of us all is to worship the gifts rather than the Giver.

Lord, today I paused to admire a flower. Its beauty struck me with a new realisation of its wonder—the delicacy of its petals, the fragrance of its nectar, the loveliness of its colours. It set me thinking what a world we live in. The rolling mountains and the fertile valleys, the peaty burns and majestic rivers... the grace of birds and the intricacy of tiny creatures like the honey bee...

And now, Lord, your Word has come to me that humankind has worshipped and served the creature rather than You, the Creator. I see with shame that I am included in this sin. I

have loved your gifts rather than You, the Giver. I have struggled to possess what you have made rather than to possess You, the Maker. I have spent years pursuing life, but I have not pursued You Who are the life. I, too, have failed to keep this Second Commandment, Lord.

My child, this is the way of men and women. They devote themselves to all I have made, to explore with minds that I have given, to appreciate with senses that I have bestowed. My will was that their work should bring them to find in My creation the mirror of My majesty. But instead of finding Me, they have only found My work; and the things I have made they have exalted.

The sorrow of this world is that, without Me, My gifts can never satisfy the cravings of men's hearts, nor bring the peace for which they search. For this is My way: first you must acknowledge Me, love Me and serve Me; then you will find My gifts are but My servants to bring you to Me.

Lord, I am seeing more clearly that every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father. May I, in everything, give thanks to you, and be brought closer to You through Your gifts to me.

David Searle

## Dalitso Update

### Dalitso Online Event - ZooMalawi

Our ZooMalawi event held on the 17th March was well attended with over 50 people joining us online. The evening included our AGM business. The event centred around 7 young people interviewed about the impact having a sponsor has had on their lives. Charles and Kiri also spoke about the highs of 2020 but also the obstacles they face in their work. These videos will be available to watch through our Facebook page over the next few weeks for those that were not able to attend and links shared in our next magazine. As chairperson I reported on the challenges of 2020 but also all that was achieved. This included building a shop and bakery at Kambilonjo, building a wall around our land in Thyolo and distributing blankets to every child under our care. Our centres were closed for much of the year due to restrictions put in place to control the transmission of Covid-19 so the main bulk of our staff's work was out in the community ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our children. This involved working with girls aged 12-18 years and their guardians to encourage them to continue in their education

when schools reopened, providing maize, soap and hand washing training to our communities and continuing the work of the infant rescue programme. I also shared the priorities for 2021.

Becky gave an update on the Dochas Medical Centre which included news of our new partnership with the Christian Health Association of Malawi.

Our financial report for the year 2020 was given by Doris, our treasurer. If you would like a copy of any of these 3 reports please do get in touch at info@dalitso.org. Finally the charity trustees, Charis Bowie, Doris Bowie, Fraser Dunphy, Sheila Dunphy, Caroline Farquhar, Jonathan Milne and Neil Grant were all re-elected.

Thank you to all that attended the event and to all those that have continued to support us throughout 2020. It was a challenging year for all, but one that saw young people in Thyolo and Kambilonjo continue to be provided with support in food, education and health. This was only possible through the continued support of so many of you. On behalf of the children at our centres I thank you.

Charis

## Guild News

Jenni and Isobel gave us an update of our Guild Projects at our meeting on the 8th of March. This is the last year of these particular projects – Boys Brigade – Faith in Young People; CrossReach – Join the Dots; Malawi Fruits – Growing the Future; Sailors' Society – A Chaplain for our Ports; The Free to live Trust – Seema's Project and World Mission Council – Journey Together, Empowering Teenage Mothers in Zambia. The Guild partnership funding has gone a long way in helping these projects, especially in this pandemic year. We will be hearing about our new Projects soon.

Joyce and Anne organised our meeting for 22nd March

when Karen MacKinnon, Centre Head, Dundee gave a Zoom talk on the great work that happens and the great support given, at the Maggie's Centre. Around a dozen Guild folk were able to attend by Zoom and had the opportunity to ask questions. Those unable to attend received printed information from the Powerpoint that Karen used.

Our next meeting is on 5th April, entitled "New Beginnings" when we will hear from Fiona and Pat.

Our AGM will be held on Zoom on 19th April and reports will be sent out beforehand.

"Whose we are and whom we serve."

## World Day of Prayer

This is held on the first Friday in March and this year, due to the restrictions, there were no local church services and everyone was invited to join the National World Day of Prayer on Zoom. Well, I did try, but the following message popped up "This meeting is at capacity – This meeting has reached the maximum number of allowed participants". I was disappointed that I wasn't able to join but wasn't it marvellous that it had reached its capacity – 1000 people participating in the World Day of Prayer?

The prayer focus this year was on the island of Vanuatu in the South Pacific and, although I couldn't get on Zoom, I was pleased to learn that it's on Youtube – just type in World Day of Prayer 2021 and there is half an hour or so watching folk from all over the world participating in this special day - and the scenery is wonderful. Roberta managed to get on the Zoom meeting and found it a real inspiration and enjoyed it very much. Next year the Scotland Committee will be hosting the World Day of Prayer International Meeting in Edinburgh from June 12 – 19, 2022, the theme being "New Heart, New Mind, Called to Hope" from Ephesians chapters 1 v 18.

## Safeguarding Co-ordinator

After many years as our Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Eleanor Jakobsen, is stepping down from this position and we would like to thank her for all those years of excellent work that she has done for our church.

We therefore need to appoint a replacement. The new incumbent should have current or previous professional or voluntary experience, and hence a good understanding of child and/or adult support and protection.

If you are interested in finding out more information on this role please contact Joan Hainsworth, Session Clerk.

## Growing Young

In recent months a small team from the church have been involved with Growing Young. Growing Young was researched and is now led by Fuller Youth Institute and our church is part of the first Scottish cohort. Growing Young is about making our church more intergenerational – it is called Growing Young but churches who "Grow Young" and invest in their young people experience vitality in all aspects of church life.

The team have engaged in a series of summits, webinars and coachinars led by the Growing Young Team, as well as meeting regularly to begin to put plans in place for our own local context. We have learned about the six core commitments and reflected on what they mean in our church. These were shared in church services at the beginning of February.

We have also completed a church assessment where the congregation had the chance to share their views about each of the core commitments. We will share the results of the survey in more detail soon. It was particularly encouraging that three of the core commitments scored particularly well and the survey has also given us clear areas for development.

## CHARITY SKYDIVE

Our very own Billy Beattie turned 60 last year and had to postpone his birthday charity skydive due to the pandemic. Billy has now rearranged the date to Saturday, 5th June in St Andrews (weather permitting).

All money raised will be donated to local mental health charity, Reach Across.

If you would like to support Billy then please contact him by email at

willbeattie73@gmail.com

or call/text him on

07580 249683.



Our progress to date has been quite slow. As is the case with virtually everything, the pandemic and the restrictions that come with it have been frustrating and have meant that some plans have been put on hold and other plans have taken longer to implement since we aren't able to meet together in person. The good news is that we knew from the outset that Growing Young wasn't going to be a quick fix and all of the churches in the cohort are feeling the same way. We are looking forward to continuing to work on the principles of Growing Young in the weeks, months and years to come. At the moment we are preparing the soil and planting seeds – we look forward to the day that we see the fruits of our labour.

We will continue to share updates about our plans and progress in the coming months. In the meantime we would encourage you to pray for our young people and also the Growing Young team.

Amy Scott