



Whoever Has Ears, Let Them Hear

There will always be those who want to put a political spin on everything that happens, but I think that most of us heard about the death of Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh, with a sense of sadness - and not least when thinking about her Majesty the Queen's personal loss. As she put it, he was her "strength and stay" throughout all of the years of her reign and of course they had been married since 1947.

Prince Philip had about him a roguish sense of humour that sometimes got him into hot water but, beyond that, he was a man of considerable intellect and of spiritual curiosity. That's something that is to be encouraged. As soon as we stop enquiring - telling ourselves that we've got it all worked out - we're on dangerous ground. That which we know about God will always be matched, and surpassed, by that which remains beyond our ability to grasp. So faith should grow out of the asking of questions and we should never tire of asking questions.

These events caused me to cast my mind back to the September of 2014 and to my weekend spent at Balmoral, by invitation of Her Majesty. As I've mentioned elsewhere, the Saturday night of that weekend included a barbecue on the royal estate and it was the Duke of Edinburgh who took command of the preparation of the food. I can't remember exactly but if memory serves me well there were about 15 guests at that occasion and he, without assistance, cooked for the whole gathering - not bad for a man who at that stage was 92 years of age!

But what stands out for me even more was what happened later on that Saturday evening. By then the party had returned to Balmoral Castle and we were each in our own quarters. Then, about 10.45pm, the phone rang in my room and it was the Queen's lady in waiting. She asked me what bible passage

I was going to be preaching on the next morning and that the seeking of this information was so that the Queen might be properly prepared for the service.

Let no one be in any doubt as to the sincerity of the Queen's faith. And might it be that in the days ahead, this is a practice that those of us associated with Saint Andrew's Church might want to adopt? It would be easy enough for us to announce the bible passage the week before, or on our social media pages, and therefore simple for each one of us to turn to that passage, to read it, reflect on it and to pray that God would speak to us through it.

This is a matter of anticipation and expectation. When we come to worship - whether in person or online - are we expecting an encounter with the living God? Are we anticipating that Almighty God - our Heavenly Father - will indeed speak to us?

There is so much that we miss in life because we are not looking for it. Even a walk in the country is transformed for those who go expecting to be surprised and delighted by the detail of the created order. Just yesterday, while walking in our neighbourhood, I saw two red squirrels which, had I been overly preoccupied with other matters, I would almost certainly have missed. The same is true in the spiritual sense; if our minds are not ready to receive, we will most likely miss what otherwise would have been a blessing to us - as those squirrels most assuredly were!

'Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying...' Revelation 2:29

Martin Fair.

Guild News

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 19th April, with some members being able to attend on Zoom. The Reports etc. were distributed prior to the meeting so that all members had sight of all the necessary information before the actual meeting. Because we were unable to have an AGM last year due to the first lockdown, two years' worth of Reports were needed. Joyce, Anne and Joan stepped down from the committee and we would like to thank them all for their hard work and we were also grateful to Rev Ian Gray for joining us and for his support and encouraging words. Business ran smoothly and at the close of the meeting the Zoom folk were invited to stay on for a game, while those at home had word puzzles to complete provided by Joan.

The Afternoon Teas which we had to postpone since the

New Year will be delivered on Saturday 24th April so a big thank you to everyone who has had to wait. Proceeds from our Afternoon Teas were a big part of our fundraising for our two projects 'Sailors' Society' and 'Seema's Project' and we were pleased that we raised £500 each for these. For the six projects over the three years the total from all the Guilds came to a fantastic total of £539,675. The new Guild Projects for the next three years were launched on Zoom on the 15th April - more information later.

With the AGM being the last meeting of the session the Guild now has its 'annual break' but no doubt the committee will be organising a few events over the coming months, depending on relaxation of restrictions.

"Whose we are and whom we serve."

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ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Member Records****April 2021****Baptisms and Blessings** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - Nora Boath**IMPORTANT DATE****JUNE EDITION****Word Processed files, as attachments, should be sent directly to the Editor****Tuesday 25h May (Word-Processed file)**

Theophilus

The Third Commandment

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Exodus 20:7*God has highly exalted Him and given Him a Name which is above every name... Jesus is Lord.*

In days gone by, 'In the King's name!' meant 'By authority of the king.' To ignore or disobey a proclamation made in the king's name was treason. In other words the *name* stood for the *person*. So with our God. Reverence for his Name means reverence for Him.

Lord, on Sunday in church, I enjoyed the singing, even though it was only by video on a screen. Especially one hymn. It was one of my favourites. The tune was catchy, the organ majestic. I really entered into it. We all did. When the hymn ended, I looked up the words on my phone and let my eye run over them.

*'In the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,
Every tongue confess Him King of Glory now.'*

It suddenly struck me, Lord, how far we are from that. I thought of so many of my friends who don't know you as Lord. I couldn't help thinking of the way your holy Name is used as a swear word—on the bus, in the office, at the club. I found myself saddened that your great Name is dishonoured. How I long that my friend's attitude towards you would change.

But more than that came to me in the hymn, Lord. It was in that line, '*In your hearts enthrone Him...*'. I'm beginning to see that dishonour for you goes much deeper than ignoring the commandment about your Name. It includes my obedience to You, my reverence for You as my Lord and King.

*My Child, I am glad that you have been touched by that holy jealousy for the honour of my Name. I too am grieved that men and women treat My Name so lightly. But it is because they do not know Me.**My love can only reach them when those who do know Me, enthrone Me in their lives. Then I will have channels through whom I can flow, instruments which I can use.*

Thank you, Lord, for Sunday's worship. Thank you for the atmosphere and warmth of fellowship. Thank you for the presence of your Spirit, and for the Word you spoke to my heart. Help me to carry my reverence for you into my daily work. May I not just *call* you Lord, but may I *do* the things you say.

David Searle

Can you help?

There is a small area of grass at the rear of the church which, for many years, Anne Burnett has maintained and cut every two weeks during the growing season. Anne is now retiring and we would like to thank her for her wonderful dedication and hard work that she has given over those years.

We are therefore looking for a volunteer(s) who might take over this role – if there were more than one it could be shared on a rota basis. All the equipment required is stored on site so there is no need to bring anything with you. Please contact the church office if you can help. Thank you.

(The picture on the back page shows the small area of grass being referred to.)

Financial report 2020

Every year, as part of our normal calendar of event, we have our Annual Stated Meeting which follows after Kirk Session has approved our accounts for the previous year. This year however, Annual Stated Meetings cannot be held as a result of COVID-19 related restrictions and in line with guidance from '121'. This year, therefore, I thought it would be useful to include in Quest a summary of what would have been presented at the Annual Stated Meeting in relation to our 2020 accounts.

The full accounts are now available – if you would like a copy, please email finance@arbroathstandrews.org

As you might imagine, as with all other aspects of life the pandemic has impacted on us financially. However, due to the continued faithful giving of you all as a congregation, this impact is much less than it might otherwise have been – so a huge 'thank you' for that!

At the Annual Stated Meeting I would normally cover all our different funds, but for this summary report, I will focus on three specific funds. However, if anyone would like further details regarding other funds, please contact me by email.

General Fund

In mid-2020, there were concerns that income to the General Fund was going to be heavily impacted as a result of restriction, in particular the closing of church buildings. To mitigate against potential shortfall in income for the General Fund, Kirk Session agreed a range of financial actions to ensure there were sufficient funds in the General Fund for day-to-day running of the church. This included transferring funds in from reserve and retaining the 2019 fund surplus in the fund for 2020.

The congregation's regular giving has been sustained and although there was a dip in the early stages of lockdown we have largely 'caught up' as freewill offering envelopes have come in and many regular givers have moved to direct/online banking for their giving. As you might imagine though, the one area of giving which was, and is still not possible, is the 'open plate' offering.

Our 2019 Gift Day saw a tremendous response for the congregation with offerings totalling £14,000 (including Gift Aid) – almost £5,000 higher than the 2019 Gift Day figure. As a result, income from congregational giving was 'only' down £3,534 on the previous year. The lack of 'open plate' offerings being the main contributing factor to this.

The biggest drop in income was in relation to lets and donations from groups who use our halls – this income was down £6,442 on the previous year. However, we benefited from the Government Job Retention scheme which saw £8,233 of support come in for the General Fund. With regard to expenditure, the key items directly affected by the pandemic restriction were travel costs and printing/stationary costs. There were also additional non-pandemic related cost savings arising from '121' covering the cost of our Associate Minister to support us during our minister's time as Moderator of General Assembly.

The net effect for the General Fund was that we were able to end in surplus. If this were adjusted to take account of the mitigation measures which were put in place, the outturn would have been £7,732, which is much better than we could have anticipated during the early stages of the pandemic. It is worth noting that we would have had a small deficit of £501 had we not put mitigation measures in place and not had government support through the Job Retention Scheme.

Although we can now have much more confidence in predicting income for 2021, Kirk Session have agreed that the mitigation measures should remain in place for the time being and the position can be reassessed later in 2021.

Havilah Fund

In relation to the Havilah Fund, the management group have received confirmation from key funders – Angus Council and The National Lottery Community Fund – that funding support would continue as planned. It is worth noting that the outturn for 2020 is lower than it should be as the £30,000 grant payment from the Lottery Fund, which normally comes into the account in December did not come into the account until early 2021. Therefore, in relation to income there has been no negative impact directly arising from COVID-19 restrictions, albeit the restrictions have had a huge impact on the nature of the work that can be undertaken.

Ministry Team Fund (MTF)

In relation to the MTF, there has been no impact financially as a result of the pandemic. Though again, there has been a huge impact on the nature of the work that can be undertaken due to COVID-19 restriction.

Financial Summary

Below (next page) is a summary for all the church funds as at 31 December 2019 (extract from note 13 to the accounts page 24).

If anyone would like further information or has any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at finance@arbroathstandrews.org.

Scott Anderson

Finance and Admin Core Group

Financial Extract

	£
Endowment funds	
Mary Salmond Bequest	52,084
Restricted funds	
Havilah	26,079
Ministry Team Fund	31,065
Mental Health Projects	8,640
Toy Fund	1,045
Holiday Meals	671
	<hr/> 67,499
Unrestricted designated funds	
General Reserve Fund	24,027
Benevolent Fund	13,306
Fabric Fund	7,750
Mission Work	4,082
Sunday Club	6,712
Stipend Fund	4,510
Youth Group	3,686
	<hr/> 64,073
Unrestricted undesignated funds	
General Fund	33,745
Jean Glen Legacy	14,911
Unrestricted assets:	
Manse	212,000
Community Spirit	38,835
Total unrestricted undesignated	<hr/> 299,491
Unrestricted funds total	<hr/> 363,564
Total funds	<hr/> 483,147

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Looking for bits and bobs....

Helen Wallace and Heather Black are making some twiddle/activity blankets and they would be delighted to receive anything that could be attached to the blankets.

Things like small zips, big buttons, bits of material for making patches, netting, bells, beads, keyring rings, ribbon, cord, fleece for backing the blankets, children's shirts etc.

Items can be popped through the church letterbox or collected by prior arrangement with the church office. Below is a photo of what a blanket can look like.

Thank you in advance for any help or donations.

