



QUEST

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Renewing Church Life

It's quite easy in a time like this to be under the impression that there's not much happening in terms of Church life. In fact, though there's less visibility, there's plenty happening!

Of course we **worship** twice weekly - Sunday mornings at 11am and Wednesday mornings at 10.30am. Thankfully, restrictions are now easing and we are hopeful that more and more of you will join us again in person. What a joy it was on the 23rd January to welcome back Peggy Kyle and Ann Fyfe - both of whom were back for the first time.

Over Christmas, when we were not meeting in person, we held Zoom services - even including a blessing service for baby Una Smith!

We continue to offer **pastoral care**. Between Martin and Ian Gray, close to 200 pastoral visits were conducted in the autumn period. And last year, sadly, over 40 funerals were conducted.

We're beginning to pick up again in terms of **nurture**. Over 70 of you signed up for The Bible Course. We're running four groups a week and it's a case of so far so good as we

devote ourselves to becoming more able in terms of handling our bibles.

We remember that **outreach** is crucial to the life of any Church - outreach to all ages. Carla has resumed Messy Church and plans are in place for her to roll out Bible Alive to all the local primary schools and to run The Easter Code for such schools as we can accommodate. And for adults, Havilah is operating four days a week and even when in recent lockdown, provided meals for needy people and made arrangements to support clients through 'walk and talk' outdoor sessions.

Of all that we've missed, **fellowship** has been top of the list. The Guild has been meeting as has the Dementia Support Cafe but so much of the casual contact has been missing. We're all longing for when it's possible to have a resumption of fellowship opportunities.

So church life goes on and now it's a case of onwards and upwards!

Easter Holiday Club

We've run so many Holiday Clubs for children through the years. Not being able to offer one at Easter 2020 or in 2021 was hugely disappointing.

Can we say for sure that we'll be good to go this Easter? No. Nothing is certain these days! And yet, there is a sense

that in moving from 'pandemic' to 'endemic' we're getting to the point where getting on with it will be the order of the day.

Our intention, therefore, is to run a holiday club during the second week of the Easter school holidays. We'll assess the situation as we move forward and make a final decision early in March.

Digital Ministry

Inevitably so, when there are new developments of any kind, there are some who embrace them enthusiastically and others who are resistant. As a rule, and somewhat sadly, the Church has generally majored on the latter, being slow to embrace a changing world. There is no doubt that some of the Church of Scotland's present struggles stem from a deep-seated reluctance to develop in accordance with changing social patterns and emerging technologies.

St. Andrew's was not slow to see some of the possibilities of new technology. Many years before it became standard, the Kirk Session showed real courage and commitment in investing what was then a considerable sum of money to buy our first video projector. And in the years that followed, that direction of travel was continued until we got to the point of installing equipment to allow us to both live stream our services and record them for later sharing. In recent times, we're seeing an average of about 40 log-ins live each Sunday

morning - some of these no doubt single people and others couples etc. - and to take the last two Sundays as examples, we've had an average of 150 views of the services on catch-up.

So was the investment worth it? Absolutely. And now the vast majority of churches - forced into it by covid - have followed suit.

Even so, we continue to move forward and in recent days, we've launched a church Instagram page and Martin has just launched a weekly podcast titled, 'To Be Fair'. All of this is with no other intention other than raising our profile, making connections and establishing relationships with people who would not be likely to step inside a church building any time soon.

If you're digitally capable and/or a user of social media, check out what we're doing and subscribe to our various platforms.

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ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Member Records****December 2021 / January 2022****Baptisms** - Alexis, daughter of Michael & Adele Marr**Weddings** - Cary Stewart & Ellie McLean**Funerals** - Ruth Spink, Pamela Christie, Margaret Lillie

Martin and Ian, our pastoral assistant, conducted other funerals though none were of members of our congregation. Nonetheless, we remember the bereaved families in our prayers.

IMPORTANT DATE**MARCH EDITION****Word Processed files,
as attachments,
should be sent directly
to the Editor by****Tuesday 22nd February****The Sixth Commandment***You shall not kill. Exodus 20:13**Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer. 1 John 3:15**But I say to you, 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven.' Matthew 5:44-45***In the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord expounds the Sixth Commandment as forbidding the emotion of unrighteous anger. He then applies this principle to losing one's temper, to cruel gossip and to the sneering insult (Matthew 5:21-22).**

Lord, when I read the Sixth Commandment, I congratulated myself that here at last was a law I had never broken. I was proud and ready to give myself credit as an upright citizen. I went on to think harshly of those who had taken the life of another.

Until, Lord, I stumbled on your words about this law. And I found you saw the seeds of murder in unjust anger, gossip and sneers. And then the sword of your mouth wounded me and the light of your eye opened my heart to me, and I discovered the broken fragments of this terrible commandment littering my life.

I remembered, Lord, my intense irritation whenever a certain person appears—how much he annoys me! It's a clash of personalities and he can't help it; but I feel such anger welling up in me. There have even been times when I've almost hated him, Lord.

I remembered a conversation about a colleague. We stirred up a teaspoonful of fiction with a tablespoonful of hearsay and a pinch of *possible fact*, and the mixture we made was cruel and insulting. We murdered a reputation that day. I remembered my biting sarcasm, the cutting wit of my words which made some laugh, but my victim winced in pain as my arrows found their target.

Lord, my complacency shrivels up when your Word falls on me. I find that I am guilty, even before this law.

*My child, if the commandment wounds you, it is only so that I might heal you. And I heal that you may learn to love as I have loved you. Together, you and I must pray for those who grieve and hurt us. We must win them by our love—my love in you. For the greatest power on earth is love.***Dalitso Project Update**

Christmas may be a distant memory here in Scotland but Christmas is still to come in Malawi as we continue to await the arrival of our container. It is now making its way from Mozambique to Malawi, the final part of its journey, after a number of delays that are outwith everyone's control. When it will arrive we do not know but when it does it will bring excitement to our children and staff. Please pray for its safe arrival particularly now as Malawi experiences extreme weather.

There is concern across Malawi surrounding the next harvest. Rains were expected and so many planted, but then the rains were delayed meaning many crops were wasted. Those that could afford were able to replant

but are now faced with extreme rain that not only will wash away the young plants but has caused destruction to property. We have heard that this has affected some of the guardians' homes in Kambilonjo. Please pray for this situation and for those that have been left homeless. We will report more fully in our next magazine as information on the impact has only started to arrive at time of writing.

On a more positive note, our Christmas fundraisers were well supported. 43 cake boxes were delivered across the town and many Alternative Gifts were bought for friends and family. Thank you all for your continued support. We hope this year we will be able to welcome you back to a face to face fundraiser.

Charis

Martin Fair

February 2022

Dear friends,

Thirty years and counting!

I do remember when starting out as your minister, having a vague notion that I'd stay for five or six years then probably move on. That was the way of it back then for lots of ministers. It was as if the first charge was a kind of training ground - somewhere to make all your mistakes - but that there were bigger things in store lying beyond. In fact the idea that I might, like Mr McLeod, stay for thirty years or more seemed ridiculous, laughable really!

And so my ordination and induction to St. Andrew's Church took place on the 28th January 1992. And here I am, still here. And do I have regrets about that? Not even one.

The truth is that at many times throughout those years, I've had opportunities to go elsewhere AND that I've very seriously asked the question of myself. Always, the idea that I might just be marking time, staying put because it was comfortable to do so, filled me with horror.

So I have never stopped reflecting and praying - never stopped asking, 'Lord, is this still where you would have me minister?' It's one thing to be called in the first place but there needs to be a continual renewal of that call. One needs to have a sense of it still 'being right.'

And all I can say to you is that at no time have I been left with anything other than confirmation to stay. Or to put it the other way, at no time has it seemed right to answer any of the other calls that presented themselves. I can only hope and pray that my discerning was right; that I was indeed properly sensing the leading of the Lord.

My overall sense of those thirty years? Gratitude.

It's been such a privilege to minister in this community - the community that is our home. And within that, an enormous privilege to be YOUR minister. I can close my eyes and easily see the faces of all those who have been part of our story - some still very much part of things, others who have gone ahead of us to glory. Too many to mention, of course, and yet without people there is no story.

Elaine has been with me every step of the way. On the cover of the order of service that was used on the night of my ordination service, there is a picture of both of us. That's the way we always saw it; that we were a team, in it together. I'm grateful for her.

And ultimately my gratitude is towards God who has blessed and provided, led and guided.

What's next? Well of course I'll continue to test God's call. I'll continue to pray, 'would you still have me minister here?' And I shall seek to be obedient to that, whether it means staying here for the whole of my ministry or leaving in six months time.

Either way, Soli Deo gloria.

With love,
Martin & Elaine

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Guild News

Hello folks - here we are at the beginning of a new year and, dare I say it, the outlook seems brighter than the last one. However, having said that, and taking advice from Guild Office in Edinburgh to all Guilds, we have unfortunately been unable to hold our first meeting for 2022 due to the Covid restrictions.

Our 17th of January meeting was to be a reflection on words/phrases which have proved inspirational to us. Jenni was able to gather in some of our thoughts and emailed/

posted these on to everyone to read and ponder.

On 31st of January we should have been enjoying an interesting evening with Carla learning all about the youth work being done both by the church and Carla herself. This will now take place on the 11th of April which is also our AGM.

Our next meeting will hopefully be the 14th of February - Covid rules permitting - when we will look forward to a fish and chip tea and Quiz. (Hope the fish feeds our brains - ha! ha!)

"Whose we are and whom we serve"

More In Photos



Donald Wood is joining us for his final placement in training for the ministry



Café Church on 12th December



An online blessing on Zoom for the Bowie family showing the benefits of modern technology



A little Marr (Michael and Adele's) looking forward to being baptised!



Johnny Milne and Cloe Leachars, in Lawson



Ellie McLean and Cary Stewart, in St Andrew's