



ALL CHANGE

The winds of change are blowing - and perhaps for the best. In terms of the Church, many people seem reluctant to embrace new things and yet, clearly, inherited and traditional ways have not been working for some considerable time. Congregations have shrunk, many have closed altogether and the people of Scotland are as disengaged from the Church as they have been in a very long time.

Now it will take more than structural change to turn that around. Nothing short of God-breathed revival will do! But while we long for that, there is nothing to stop us in the meantime doing what we can to reshape the way we organise ourselves.

To that end, we're moving from having 46 presbyteries across the land (including the Presbytery of England and the International Presbytery) to a new model of just ten presbyteries. Naturally, each will be considerably bigger but will have enough 'oomph' to organise properly and to resources local congregations more effectively. Many of these new 'super presbyteries' are already in place and ours - the new Presbytery of Perth - comes into being on 1st January 2023. In this new body we'll be joining with the presbyteries of Dundee, Dunkeld & Meikle, Perth and Stirling.

And further to these regional changes - and as we've already outlined in previous editions of Quest - the Church in Angus is going to look quite different. In Arbroath and the surrounding area, all of the congregations are going to come together to operate as one. There will still be a range of buildings being operated, with worship in various of these each Sunday - including our own. But the ministers will work together as a team, mission and outreach will be understood as a shared activity, and in terms of leadership, oversight, organisation and management, we'll be working as one.

Jesus' final prayer when with his disciples was: 'I ask that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.' (John 17.) Churches coming together is surely a visible expression of that.

Fun, Food & Friendship

Having started early in November - and working with various of the other churches in town - a new service is now up and running. Fun, Food & Friendship is sited in our Community Spirit building and runs each weekday from 4pm, with a freshly-made two course meal being served at around 5pm.

Anyone can come... and the food has been great! Well done to the volunteer cook teams! But the project has been started largely as a response to the ongoing cost of living crisis and in acknowledgement of the fact that, as the winter deepens, ordinary folk in our community are going to struggle to manage.

So here's an example of the Church serving and working hand in hand with the wider community. Much to be pleased about.

If you know of anyone who might benefit, please spread the word.

Advent & Christmas 2022

4 Dec - 11am - Family Worship Service with Sunday Club & Crèche - and with guest Ruth Kennedy, Pioneer Minister to the Under-40s in Dunblane

11 Dec - 11am - Family Worship Service with Sunday Club & Crèche

18 Dec - 11am - Service of Lessons and Carols with Sunday Club & Crèche followed by Sunday Club Christmas Party

24 Dec - 6.30pm - All-age PJ Service

24 Dec - 11.15pm - Watchnight Service

25 Dec - 10am - Christmas Day Family Worship Service

27 Dec - 6.30pm - Memorial & Thanksgiving Service

1 Jan - 10.30am - Joint Arbroath Churches Worship Service at St. Mary's Scottish Episcopal Church, Springfield Church

CHURCH OFFICE: 431135**ADMINISTRATOR**

Linda Hunter: 431135

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

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

Ian Gray: 01674 677126

SESSION CLERK

Joan Hainsworth: 875409

TREASURER

Pending

CHURCH OFFICER

Janis Clark: 878594

**CHILDREN & FAMILIES
WORKER**

Carla Ingram: 07931 420 905

**HAVILAH PROJECT
LEADER**

Tracey McLeod: 434088

**HAVILAH SUPPORT
WORKER**

Karen Reaney: 01307 818277

**HAVILAH PROJECT
WORKER**

Tammy Stuart: 434088

FABRIC CONVENOR

Pending

SUNDAY CLUB

Elaine Fair: 873238

FREEWILL ENVELOPES

Linda Hunter: 431135

SAFEGUARDINGKim Marr
07986 447365**FLOWER CONVENOR**Margaret McIntosh:
01307 641355**PRAYER COORDINATORS**Scott and Elaine Anderson
890291**SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR**

Janis Clark: 878594

BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER

Linda Hunter: 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR

Ken Miller: 875235

ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Member Records****October/November 2022****Baptisms** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - Sue Pritchard, Adrian Jones

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**FEBRUARY EDITION**

Word Processed files,
as attachments,
should be sent directly
to the Editor by

**Tuesday 24th
January**

Christmas Evans

The one-eyed Welsh Preacher

On 25 December 1766 in the village of Llandysul in South Wales Johanna, wife of Samuel Evans a poor shoemaker, gave birth to a healthy baby boy. The doting mother called him 'Christmas Evans' — the best 'Christmas gift' she had ever received. When her little boy was 8 years old, his father died. His poverty-stricken mother gave him to his uncle, who later gave him as a servant to a cruel, drunken farmer. For nine years the boy led a miserable life as a virtual slave.

At age 17 years, Christmas found employment with David Davies, a Presbyterian Minister in Llandysul, and for the first time he came into contact with sincere Christians. Until then he had known only the Welsh language but now, he learned both English and how to read and write.

When Christmas surrendered wholly to Jesus Christ, some of his former companions in the village were so angry that they beat him up so badly that he lost one eye. The next night he dreamed he saw the world on fire and vast multitudes being summoned to the Judgement. He believed it was a call to preach the Gospel.

Christmas obtained a copy of John Bunyan's works which he read again and again, especially The Pilgrim's Progress; Bunyan's allegorical style deeply affected him.

For the next 53 years he pastored congregations in many areas of the land, and wherever he preached men and women of all ages were transformed by the gospel. Here is a typical example of his allegorical preaching style:

Saul of Tarsus was once a thriving merchant and an extensive ship owner. He had seven vessels of his own, the names of which were: (1) circumcised the eighth day; (2) of the stock of Israel; (3) of the tribe of Benjamin; (4) a Hebrew of the Hebrews; (5) as touching the law, a Pharisee; (6) concerning zeal, persecuting the church; The seventh was a man of war, with which he set out from the port of Jerusalem, well supplied with ammunition from the arsenal of the chief priests, with a view to destroy a small port at Damascus. He was wonderfully confident and breathed out threatening and slaughter. But he had not got far from port before the Gospel Ship, with Jesus himself as Commander on board, hove in sight, and threw such a shell among the merchant fleet that all his ships were instantly on fire. The commotion was tremendous and there was such a volume of smoke that Paul could not see the sun at noon. While the ships were fast sinking, the Gospel Commander gave orders that the merchant should be taken on board. 'Saul, Saul, what has become of all thy ships?' 'They are all on fire.' 'What will you do now?' 'Oh, that I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.'

At age 72, tremblingly and frail, he ascended the pulpit steps of Mount Pleasant chapel in Swansea and preached his final sermon, concluding: 'I am leaving you. I have laboured for fifty-three years. My comfort is that I have never laboured without blood in the basin [referring to Christ our Passover Lamb]. Goodbye, DRIVE ON!'

Hours later the heavenly messenger called for him and the old saint was DRIVEN ON into the Lord's presence. Tens of thousands had come to faith through the one-eyed Welsh preacher.

D Searle.

Martin Fair

December 2022

Dear friends,

I can hardly believe that I'm writing these words and yet, here it is - confirmation that as per the announcement made on Sunday 27th November, Elaine and I are going to be leaving St. Andrew's Church in the first part of 2023.

Having spent over half of our lives here, and all of my ministry, you'll know that this decision has not been reached lightly. On the contrary, it's come after considerable prayerful reflection and not a few sleepless nights.

I've never pursued alternative positions but have always tried to be open. On many occasions, I've had invitations to go here or there but it's never felt right; I've never sensed anything of God's call. And throughout, these almost thirty-one years, my prayer has been 'Lord, if you would have me serve all of my ministry at St. Andrew's Church, that's what I'll do.'

Now this. An invitation to do something entirely different. I've been asked to take up a brand new position with the national church - a role described as 'Pathways to Ministry' Manager.

Over quite a few years, the Church has struggled to recruit new ministers - and particularly younger ministers. And at the same time, between sixty and seventy ministers are retiring every year. We're now facing a serious shortage. My new job will focus on encouraging a new sense of vocation across the Church, increasing the numbers wanting to serve through ministry, and overseeing the ways in which we prepare candidates for the challenging demands of ministry.

All in all, a mammoth remit and yet my sense is that I'm being called to 'go for it' in a new chapter of my seeking to serve God. An exciting new chapter, for sure, but for now my main emotion is heartbrokenness about leaving St. Andrew's. I've given my all here; I've given my best. And to Elaine and I and our boys, you've been our family. Not being among you is going to be harder than I'm able to find words for. And for that reason alone, staying put would be by far the easier option!

But the last thing I want to do is overstay my welcome - to linger because it's comfortable when perhaps what is needed in this new era is for someone else to come and, with freshness and boldness, to lead the church onwards, building on where we presently are. Every church is more than its minister and so soon enough, there will be another name to add to the list: Rev McLeod, Rev Fair, Rev _____. It's quite remarkable that St. Andrew's has only known two ministers in 64 years - quite possibly a record in the Church of Scotland.

With the date of departure still to be worked out - but certainly a little while away yet - there will of course be plenty of opportunities for more to be said and for preparations for 'what next?' to be made. I hope in the time that remains to see as many of you as possible and that together we will find opportunity to give thanks and rejoice in God's goodness throughout these years.

For now, our warmest good wishes to all who make up St. Andrew's Church.

With love,

Martin & Elaine

mfair@churchofscotland.org.uk

Guild News

As we approach the Christmas season and thoughts turn to families what better final guest speaker than Charis giving us an update on all that is happening in Malawi with the Dalitso project. What a blessing these volunteers are spending time supporting and working with our enthusiastic team at Dalitso. So many lovely success stories.

On 28th of November, the guild ladies will have an evening of crafts with a sales table providing a shopping opportunity.

ty.

The 12th of December will find the ladies enjoying Christmas dinner at Arbroath golf club. This will be a happy event with the chance to socialise and have fun.

In rounding off the news may we wish everyone a Blessed Christmas and a Guid New Year.

See you all in 2023.

"Whose we are and whom we serve"

All shall be well.

All shall be well, Lord?
It's hard to grasp in this struggling world.
Earth's foundations eroding,
stained dark by seas of suffering.
Evil surging, waves crashing with destructive force
on moving sand.
Threatening cliff-falls of faith.
Lashing the puny breakwaters of belief,
threatening inundation.

Yet, all shall be well?
Seasick with seasonal anxiety,
the hard knot of panic just below my heart, I look to you.
Wondering. Doubting.
Is your hand stretched out yet again?
Will you restrain the storm,
bring peace?

Lord, you are the still centre of every storm.
In you is a calm,
whatever the wind outside.
In you is reassurance,
however high the waves.
In you is strength,
however strong the tide.

I put myself in your hand.
The sea is vast. No landmarks.
I don't know the way.
At times I can't even point to north.
Or where the sun sets, hidden by cloud.
But I'm content to leave the navigation to you.
To meet the unknown.
To find, if not new continents of faith,
at least an island or two.
Knowing that, in spite of storm strength,
all shall be well.

And Lord, there are other sailors, other ships.
I pray for them, today.

More In Photos



Top
Mum and Me
Christmas Craft
Fair

Left
Young helpers
clearing up after
Sunday Club!

Right
Martin with guest
preacher,
Fred Drummond,
Sunday 11th
September

