



## Thank You

Dear friends,

Quite a few weeks have passed since what was for Elaine and I quite the most momentous weekend – if traumatic, emotionally-speaking! But it's now only with much happiness and special memories that we look back on our taking our leave of you – or as we might say, your releasing and sending out of us. Both the Friday evening social event and the final Sunday service were filled with opportunities to say goodbyes and to reminisce AND most importantly, to thank God for the richness of his blessings upon us.

I'm happy to report that I'm settling very nicely into my new role and beginning to get a true sense of the size of the challenge. My new colleagues have welcomed me warmly and I'm sure that before much longer I'll be fully 'up to speed.' All of that said, the first week wasn't easy. It was all such a big change from the last thirty-one years and I don't mind saying that there were moments of wondering 'Have I done the right thing?' In hindsight, I guess such 'moments' were inevitable given the scale of the upheaval. Either way, having come through that, my sure sense is that this move has been under God's leading and guiding.

My principal purpose in writing is to say how humbled and grateful Elaine and I were to be subject to the generosity of the congregation. We were bowled over by the beautiful picture of the church presented to us on the Friday night. It hangs proudly in our dining area and will always be a reminder of happy days and, no doubt, a topic for conversation with new friends we'll meet along the way. And the cheque was such a surprise to us and might we say, a most pleasant one. In moving out of the manse, we've done some of what is commonly called 'downsizing!' and one of the consequences of that is that various pieces of our old furniture did not fit in our new house! We're delighted to have been able to put in a beautiful new dining room suite and some other occasional pieces as a result of your incredible kindness.

With those few words, we would end by wishing you all God's richest blessings in all the days ahead.

With love,

Martin & Elaine

### From the Session Clerk

I would like to thank everyone who came along to the Social Evening on 3rd March to make it a very memorable evening for Martin and Elaine. Morning worship on Sunday 5th March was a very special day with many guests joining us that day. It was a beautiful service led by Martin, as well as being a day full of emotion and tears.

Rev Dr Jonathan Humphrey and his wife Kate have now joined us. On behalf of the congregation of St Andrew's

Church I would like to welcome Jonathan and look forward to him leading us in worship and getting to know our church family.

As we move through this time of transition God knows the way and we must put our trust in Him and all will be well.

God's Blessing be upon you.

Joan Hainsworth

Session Clerk

### Church of Scotland Presbytery of Perth

To all church members.

The new Presbytery starts at a time of many challenges for the Church of Scotland and our world. In the midst of all the uncertainties we affirm the lasting truth, secure hope and dynamic relevance of

**“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever”**

It is not a case of “Why don't they?” but “Why don't we? Let us...” for all Christians are in the front-line representing Jesus.

The first of the five marks of mission from which all others follow is to proclaim the Good News of the kingdom. Overleaf in simple language is a summary of the Good News all Christians have to share.

We deal with an active God, operational in Creation and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He has promised to be at work in and through the lives of all Christians. As we head towards Easter, what a great dimension for our thinking and dynamic for our living: security, purpose, hope and power in and through Jesus!

Isn't that an exciting thought with which we head up towards Easter in a new Presbytery with a fresh vision!

**Rev Donna Hays – Presbytery Moderator**

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**ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH**  
**Member Records**  
**March 2023**

**Baptisms** - None

**Weddings** - None

**Funerals** - Helen (Ella) Moss, June Whyte

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**

**MAY EDITION**

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

**Monday 25th  
 April**

## God's Invitation

God made the world and all its creatures with people made in His image. By breaking his laws people have broken contact with God and damaged God's good world. This we see and sense in the world and in ourselves.

The Bible tells us the Good News that God still loves us and has shown this love uniquely in His Son, Jesus Christ.

He lived among us and died on the cross to save us from our sin. But God raised Jesus from the dead!

In his love, this living Jesus invites us to turn from our sins and enter by faith into a restored relationship with God Who gives true life before and beyond death.

Then, with the power of the Holy Spirit re-making us like Jesus, we - with all Christians - worship God and enjoy his Friendship and are available for him to use in showing and sharing his love, justice and peace locally and globally until Jesus returns!

In Jesus' name we gladly share with you God's message for all people - "You matter to God" and invite you to accept his invitation.

## Guild News

Greetings from your guild. The meeting held on 27th February proved to be very interesting. Entitled Home for Good it dealt with the need for foster families and the positive effect having the support of a loving family environment has on the children lucky enough to have been found a placement. It's not an easy start to be made homeless or to find oneself in a flat and dealing with bills cooking shopping and balancing your budget at 16 or 17. Or indeed the confusion and fear of a younger child separated from siblings or family. It was both moving and sad to be made aware of the positive aspects of finding a home and sad when the lack of these homes was illustrated.

On the 13th of March Joyce McPherson and Kim Marr gave us a wonderful presentation of the importance of our own family tree. They were able to link this both back to the Home for Good presentation, due to their experiences working in social services, and the need of us all have our roots firmly held in faith. This is why we are able to grow in

faith with God and His word as our mainstay (or trunk) allowing us to branch out and grow strong.

The next meeting will be "From Headphones to On Air" speaker Malcolm Finlayson a name some will recognise from Radio North Angus.

In conclusion and as previously noted, here follows the **National Guild Dates**. Anyone wishing more information can obtain this from Gaynor Scott.

**TUES 23rd MAY** 7pm Big Sing. Assembly rooms Edinburgh

**WED 14TH JUNE** 11am-3pm Regional gathering with Karen Gillon, General Secretary; Helen Eckford, National Convenor and Flora Buthlay, National Vice Convenor. Venue East and Old Church Forfar

**SAT 9th SEPT.** 11am - 4pm Annual Gathering Assembly Hall Edinburgh.

All that remains is to remember

**"Whose we are and whom we serve"**

## Our Christmas Offering

Our Christmas offering was split between Aberlour and Tent of Nation and we have received the following -

Dear all at St Andrew's Parish Church,

I'm writing on behalf of Aberlour to say a huge thank you to you all for your generous donation of £366.07. The past few years have been incredibly challenging for everyone, but more so for families living in pov-

erty and struggling to cope. Your generosity and kindness will make such a positive difference to the lives of local families, and we very much appreciate your support.

On behalf of the children and families who will benefit from your donation, and from all of us at Aberlour, thank you so much once again. You really are making a difference.

With our very best wishes.

Aberlour, Scotland's Children's Charity.

## Rev Dr Jonathan Humphrey

Hello to everyone in the St Andrew's family.

Kate and I are delighted to be with you and very grateful for the warm welcome we have received. Everyone has been so kind, encouraging, and supportive over these past weeks getting me up to speed with what is going on in the church and the plans for the future. I am especially grateful to Joan and Scott for helping to get my locum contract arranged with the Church of Scotland, and for all the time that Linda has spent with me sharing her knowledge of the St Andrew's family.

In amongst all of this I have a real sense of God being with us through this time of transition. Although change can be unsettling, with Him at the helm there is no need to be afraid or apprehensive. Having looked at the story of Balaam and God's blessing on the children of Israel (Numbers 21: 1-7), we are assured that He speaks those same words of blessing over us, his people on the move, "How beautiful are your tents, Jacob, your dwelling places, Israel!" Whilst

we might find the reality of being on the move quite difficult, we are encouraged to keep asking the Holy Spirit to "fill our buckets!", so that through us God might pour His grace and love into our families and our community.

In the weeks ahead we will be further exploring the theme of "the God you need to know in the transition". We will be looking at God's revelation of Himself to Moses in the desert and then move on to John's gospel and the seven "I am" statements of Jesus, revealing the character of our Heavenly Father who dwells with us in every season of our lives.

By the time you read this article Easter will be upon us, the greatest celebration of the year when we proclaim Christ Risen! I pray that we will all have a fresh encounter of this Jesus, our Lord, "the Resurrection and the Life".

Please feel free to get in touch with me as I look forward to getting to know you all.

Easter Blessings

Jonathan

## FIRMLY PLANTED!

More than fittingly, as recent news of the catastrophic floods affecting Malawi has shown, the Church of Scotland's World Mission 2023 Stamp Appeal is focussing on the establishment and management of tree nurseries across Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to help in countering the effects of climate change.

This challenging project across three great African countries (with the support of members of the Church of Scotland) is being spearheaded by The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP).

Once again, generous donations by our own local fellowship have proved impressive!

7.640 kg of stamps, representing a wonderful and inspiring mix of UK, foreign, commemorative, and historic issues have now been sent off.

Now, here's a challenge for the maths buffs amongst us - which can only be an approximation to allow for packaging and the differing sizes in stamp design:

If one stamp weighs 0.005 ozs or 0.1 gram, how many stamps might there be in this year's donation?

Grateful thanks to all who have supported this project and across several charities over so many years. Sadly, Leprosy Mission had to close its Used Stamp Collecting Project in 2022 the original link to which came via our much loved Sue Pritchard.

## Dalitso

As you may have seen in the news, Southern Malawi has been hit by Cyclone Freddy. We have seen images of Blantyre where rain water is cascading down their streets. After getting in touch with Kiri & Charles we await their news of the extent of damages to properties. Certainly, the maize photographs show flattened crops and there is no time to replant. We pray that Kambilonjo and Thyolo have not been affected as badly as Blantyre, but the knock-on effect is that prices will rise again. Watch out for further news in Quest and Facebook.

We had a very successful soup and cake event at Craft Fair

held in the church on the 11th March raising, with donations, £570. Our Sunday soup lunch on Mother's Day raised £335 which was amazing. We served after the service and continued after the AGM so thank you for all your support.

Finally we are setting a date for our AGM at the next trustee meeting. This is likely to be in May/June so further details of the event to follow.

Please keep our Malawian family in your prayers as they deal with the after effects of Freddy.

Doris

## \*\*\*\*\* EASTER BONNET COMPETITION \*\*\*\*\*

To all Guild members and anyone who would like to join us.

AN EASTER BONNET COMPETITION WILL BE HELD in conjunction with our A.G.M.

on MONDAY THE 10TH OF APRIL at 7.30 pm

## Arbroath and District Church of Scotland

### Transition Team – March Update

This is the first of several updates from your transition team as we move towards a union of the churches in Arbroath and the surrounding area.

Since the General Assembly of 2021 Presbyteries across Scotland have been working through the implications and the implementation of what's known as the Presbytery Mission Plan. Following discussions for several months last year, the town churches of Arbroath and the surrounding area came to the decision that we would unite as one church – effectively one big parish utilising 6 of our existing church buildings as worshipping centres with an additional mission centre coordinating activities. This united body will be served by a team ministry of three ministers of Word and Sacrament and a full-time youth and families worker (50% funded by the new parish), supported by the ongoing service of our elders and members.

This is part of the Plan for Angus that was presented to and approved by the national church last November. The Plan is not simply to address falling ministry numbers and a surfeit of buildings.

All this is intended to better enable us to meet the challenge of Christ Jesus and his mission to Tell the Good News, Teach people to be disciples, Tend those in need, Transform the brokenness of society, and Treasure the good creation that God has given us.

We agreed on a set of priorities for Mission in Arbroath and area. For us these are

- Proclaiming the Good news of new life in Jesus Christ
- Practical support towards alleviating the needs of those living with poverty.
- Offering friendship to those experiencing isolation, including poor mental health.
- Including and nurturing families, children and young people, with a strong emphasis on under 40s.

By bringing together experience, expertise and resources we believe we can be so much more effective, yet this doesn't mean we want to lose the gifts, talents and cultures of our current congregations.

None of this means uniformity. Whilst we are to unite, this does not mean that we will all end up being the same. We intend to retain the differing styles of our worship, traditions, cultures and engagement with the community and to honour, mark and include those of the church families where buildings are scheduled to close. These are precious things to you as to us all. We are all sisters and brothers but we are not all the same, and the relationships and styles that are valuable to us will continue to be. We hope that through a reduced burden of governance we can be freed to prioritise sharing God's love and mission to our area. In this way we can truly be more than the sum of our parts.

Since January 2023 a transition team which consists of session clerks, ministers and interim moderators for the area

have been meeting to facilitate the implementation of the process. So far, we have been involved with the following legal necessities;

- Drafting a Basis of Union and a Basis of team ministry to be approved by Kirk Sessions and members.
- Engaging with all the churches to find a united, legal name. A choice has been made – Arbroath and District Church of Scotland.
- A provisional date for congregational votes on the Union is Sunday 4th June. Assuming a positive outcome, this would result in a union date over the summer.
- Gathering key post holders from every congregation, for example treasurers, to facilitate a smooth transition.

We are also delighted that;

- Carla Ingram, who was previously the youth worker at St Andrew's Church, has now been appointed to the full-time role of youth and families worker for the united parish. We celebrated her appointment in a service at Colliston Church, on 12th February.

Yet there is still considerable practical work to be done.

- Drafting a structure of core groups and arrangements to allow each worshipping space to function on a day-to-day basis.
- Bringing together gatherings of existing core groups to share good practice and support and encourage one another.
- Conducting the feasibility studies that were a part of the plan to enable further decisions about buildings.
- Establishing better methods of communication and in different ways.

However, these are not all practical tasks. We must also re-imagine and seek God's guidance as we recognise, value and encourage one another – our traditions and histories – and adapt slowly to new ways of working.

This means that there will be limited changes to the way we worship currently, and pastoral care will be supported in much the same way. As we grow together so we will respond to the changing needs of our people and our community but at the same time we will be working together in other ways – school chaplaincy, care home worship, Messy Church, holiday clubs, Easter Code etc. We have started to do some of these things already. Some of us joined together in worship at Christmas and New Year. We are inviting folks to gather at joint services in Holy Week. We have also had joint Bible studies during Lent.

So, what can you do? This is a busy time, so please pray for the team in the coming weeks – for strength and guidance and a growing sense of God's purpose in this place. And pray that God will open the hearts and minds of the people of Arbroath to respond to his Gospel in the months and years ahead.

“Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good; his love is eternal!” Psalm 107:1

More updates next month.