

NO.166

SUMMER 2018

GRAPEVINE



DUNDEE WEST CHURCH

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GRAPEVINE

Material for the September/October issue of the Grapevine should be with the Editor immediately after the service on Sunday 26 August for publication and uplift by the congregational visitors from Sunday 2 September.

PASTORAL LETTER

Summer is here and holidays have started. For ourselves this has meant a week in Glen Fender near Blair Atholl. From our self-catering cottage we were able to walk up both sides of the Fender Burn. On the road leading towards Monzie Farm and Beinn a'Ghlo there is a widespread meadow with a rich and scattered display of wild flowers along by the roadside. These included: - Ragged Robin, Mountain Pansies, Bird-Foot Trefoil, Orchids, Red Clover and Fritillaries. Reasons given for this display are the land management arrangements. That is, there are no roadside fences or dykes and only a smallish herd of cattle, which are themselves moved to different parts of the meadow. It means that the ground is turned over in places by the cattle, but the grass is not heavily grazed as there are no sheep and only a smallish herd of cattle. It is said that this is the more ancient way of land management and thus, there is a wide array of wild flowers that are a joy to behold and attractive to bees and other insects. And of course, in Blair Atholl itself there is the water mill, which still grinds wheat to make flour from which they make and sell bread, rolls, scones and more. Both the meadow and the mill are signs of past times when life followed a slower pace and communities were more cohesive. We've moved to a time when individualism is much more prevalent. A time when people are more inclined to live within the company of family and friends but cut out the stranger and wider society. I'm coming to see the church as contrary to a society of individuals. The word church itself means community.

Not a community of like-minded people with the same interest - no.
Not a community where people have to prove themselves or pay for entry - no.

But, a community that welcomes all and has the love of God and neighbour as the bedrock.

One writer speaks of true community as: inclusive, realistic, contemplative, transforming and having a spirit of truth, justice and compassion. Our individualistic and tribal world needs communities such as this, so we can see very clearly that being church is a crucial calling in our world.

GORDON

LOOK FORWARD IN FAITH!

The morning service on June 10th included the words of the well known hymn:

“Look forward in faith, all time is in God’s hand.
Walk humbly with him and trust his future plan....”

Since we sang this hymn much has happened in the life of the congregation.

A vacancy committee has been elected to guide us in the quest for a new minister.

A congregational meeting was held in tandem with the above and approved the Financial statement for the year 2017. We look forward to the future with confidence.

The congregation has worked hard since the way going of Andrew into retirement, and it would seem appropriate to record our thanks to Jack Laidlaw, the most patient and kindly of Interim Moderators, whose wise counsel has brought us to this important time in the life of Dundee West Church.

With regard to the service of June 10th, this was delightfully crafted by Donald Orrock’s address and choice of praise which can be more fully read in this Grapevine, alongside Elizabeth Blair’s “Thought for the Day,” entitled, “One Journey, Many Roads,” making this a rather special morning service, enjoyed and commented on by so many of those present, a fit subject of publication!

BAND RAISES THE ROOF

Dundee Instrumental Band presented an attractive, varied selection of music to a very appreciative audience at a concert in the church on 2nd June.

In a most enjoyable hour-long programme, the musicians demonstrated skill, versatility and enthusiasm in their performance of a wide range of musical styles, including marches, arrangements of traditional tunes, classical and popular music.

The expressiveness of ‘O Waly Waly’ and the poignancy of ‘Highland Cathedral’ contrasted with the robust, lively rhythms of the Can-Can and Lord of the Dance. An arrangement of music by Guns ‘n’ Roses found the band in full brassy sonority and an encore, the A-Team, produced a well-merited standing ovation.

This is an impressive group of musicians, many of them young and all very dedicated. We hope to see more of them at Dundee West.



THE GUILD

We now take a break in Guild activities until September but we have two happy occasions in June to look back on.

On 5 June we had afternoon tea served by Alison James and her team of volunteers from the café – lots of mini treats in the shape of sandwiches, pastries, cream scones, cakes and endless supply of tea and coffee served in china cups. We all had a lovely time being able to sit back and have a good chat with lots of laughter. Many thanks to Alison and her team for all their hard work. I would highly recommend the café if anyone is looking for afternoon tea. Such good value for money!

Our annual Strawberry fair was on 16 June and we raised £1221. Thank you to everyone who supported it. We could not continue to put on these bigger events without the extra help of others in the congregation and, of course, all of you who came along on the day. I think there was a particularly good buzz which showed people were enjoying themselves. It is so nice to see all our loyal supporters each time, and especially lovely to have Greta Sears and Flora Smith join us this time.

There will be extra income for the Strawberry Fayre when we manage to sell DC Thomson posters which Paul Preece donated. They are with a friend of mine who used to work for DC Thomson and we will see what he advises.

STATED ANNUAL MEETING AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Sunday 17 June was an important day in the life of this congregation as we had two meetings after the service. There was a very good turn out at these meetings, a clear indication of the desire of this congregation to embrace the future.

Receiving the accounts for 2017 would normally have been in March but this was delayed for a variety of reasons. To some extent this is a formality as the accounts had been approved by the Kirk Session as they are the Trustees for the congregation. There was still some enlightened discussion and two points in particular require to be taken forward.

The election of a Nominating Committee was vital in terms of our seeking a Minister. The process has been much delayed since Andrew Greaves finished his time with us at the end of December 2015. This was in part due to the processes required by the Church of Scotland and in part due to Dundee Presbytery omitting to change the Presbytery Plan in terms of our situation when other congregations sought a new way forward.

We opted to have 13 members on the Nominating Committee, the most that the Church of Scotland would allow, in order to have the opportunity for as wide a spread of representation as possible. Our congregation responded magnificently with 17 nominations necessitating a ballot. The result confirmed the following members on the committee:

**Elizabeth Blair, Anne Coleman, Hamish Dick,
Bill Garland, Jan Goodall, Charlotte Maclachlan,
Frances Maclachlan, Adrian Milne, Donald Orrock,
Lynda Ross, Lesley Sharp, Jane Watson and Anne Wilson.**

It must be very disappointing for the four members not elected, all of whom could have served very ably on the committee, but I am sure that the congregation would like to extend thanks to them for allowing their names to go forward. It shows the strength of the congregation that we have so many interested in our future.

As far as the Nominating Committee is concerned, they have something less than two years to find the best person to lead us forward as Minister. But don't expect any progress reports. Church of Scotland regulations decree absolute confidentiality.

CHRISTIAN AID

A group our members participated in the Tay Bridge Cross at the end of April and raised £1069 between them. Thanks go to them and all those who contributed sponsorship. The annual Christian Aid lunch held after the morning service at the start of Christian Aid Week and most efficiently organised by the Guild raised £153. By means of the envelopes placed in the pews, our members contributed £357. Additional contributions by the Guild and from the Coffee Fund brought the total sent to Christian Aid to £1773.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUIZ

1. FOGGYLEA
2. COLDSIDE
3. TROTTICK
4. FLEMING GARDENS
5. MENZIESHILL
6. MIDMILL
7. BEECHWOOD
8. DOWNFIELD
9. THE GLENS
10. FINTRY
11. DRYBURGH
12. CLEMENT PARK
13. LOGIE
14. LAWSIDE
15. CHARLESTON
16. BRACKENS
17. PENTLAND
18. KIRKTON
19. CAMPERDOWN
20. ST MARYS

OFFICE BEARERS ON DUTY

Sunday 8 July

Mrs E Blair

Mrs A Almond

Mrs P Turner

Sunday 29 July

Miss F Maclachlan

Miss E Will

R Robertson

Sunday 19 Aug

J Wilson

Mrs J Goodall

Mrs C Beattie

Sunday 15 July

Mrs S Maclachlan

Mrs P Black

Miss F Will

Sunday 5 Aug

N McGill

Mrs D McGill

Miss W Paterson

Sunday 26 Aug

Miss C Maclachlan

Mrs L Sharp

Mrs M Milne

Sunday 22 July

Mrs L Ross

J Tough

Mrs C Sim

Sunday 12 Aug

D Orrock

W Lakie

Mrs C Cross

Sunday 2 Sept

Mrs E Blair

Mrs A Almond

Mrs P Turner

CHURCH FLOWERS

Sunday 8 July

Mrs E Blair, Miss J Dorward

Sunday 15 July

Mrs A Coleman

Sunday 22 July

Mrs C Webb

Sunday 29 July

Mrs D McGill

Sunday 5 Aug

Mr & Mrs P Preece

Sunday 12 Aug

Mr R Paton

Sunday 19 Aug

Mrs M Milne

Sunday 26 Aug

Mrs J Goodall

Sunday 2 Sept

Coffee Fund

FLOWER DELIVERY

Sunday 8 July

Mrs C Beattie

Sunday 15 July

Mrs A Almond

Sunday 22 July

Mrs J Hutton

Sunday 29 July

Mrs J Goodall

Sunday 5 Aug

Miss W Patterson

Sunday 12 Aug

Mrs D Taylor

Sunday 19 Aug

Mrs E Blair

Sunday 26 Aug

Mr M Revey

Sunday 2 Sept

Mrs C Beattie

"CAUGHT ON THE WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY"

(Part of a poem from an American Pastor following the separation of families at the US/Mexican border.)

And one day—in the not too distant future—
I hope—
Oh God I hope and pray
that this season of atrocities too will take its place
at history's gate
closed out from what is decent and moral and just
The tearing of child from a travel weary breast
The haunting sobs "Papa, Papa"
Running with desperation from a future of despair
Toward arms which promise
To welcome
the tired,
the poor,
the huddled masses,
yearning to breathe free
And yet with malicious and selfish intent
Arms do not liberate,
but separate and incarcerate
All as political plea
A scourge on the very fabric
Our collective moral fibre
We are marked again
on the wrong side of History
in a mutiny of everything that defines us as human;
And humility will wave her long finger in the faces of those who dug
in their heels and say
"Shame ... Shame ... Shame on you and you ... and you"
Until enough good people stand up and say,
Not on our watch
will history

judge our place
And we will usher out
this unbearable sorrow
of our nation's soul,
till then...

We must
Push forward
Resist
hold the banner high
and KNOW
this too shall pass
and so
we pray,
we call,
we cry,
we clothe,
we feed,
we donate,
we hug,
we nurture,
we campaign...

Martin Luther King once said "*The arc of the moral universe is long
but it bends towards justice*"

We pray for that bend
Good God bring that bend!
Let Justice reign for us again.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY – 10 JUNE 2018

A few weeks ago some of us attended a workshop to introduce Guild members to the new theme for the next three years which is “One Journey, Many Roads”.

As an ice-breaker at the workshop we were asked to tell each other in our groups about an occasion, trip or journey when something happened that made an unforgettable impression on us. I told the story of a holiday in Canada a few years ago with my daughter. Whilst there we picked up a coach tour from Toronto to Prince Edward Island. We travelled east along the shore of Lake Ontario and then our route took us pretty well along the banks of St Lawrence River to the Atlantic Ocean. Each time we stopped passengers moved seats so that we had different travelling companions along the way.

Now, the St Lawrence River is a very long river – 1200 km. It so happened that at the time when the guide was telling us that this was the point that the river became tidal, sitting opposite us was a farmer from norther Ontario. He said to Jan, “what’s this about tides, what does she mean?” Living so far inland – about 1700km from the coast – none of the rivers around him were affected by tides and, being a farmer, he had until then had little time for holidays. The concept of tides was new to him.

A few days later when we were in Prince Edward Island and paddling about at the water’s edge on the west coast of the Atlantic, I said, “well, Ted, what do you think of the ocean?” He replied, “it has taken me 67 years to see it and I don’t suppose I’ll ever see it again”.

Can you imagine that? In Scotland we are never more than 40 miles from the sea. We have a little of many things and we don’t always take time to think that not everyone has shared all the same experiences, but then, again if you think about it, we haven’t always shared theirs.

With this story so recently brought back to mind, when we are considering our situation in Dundee West, about to look for a minister and how to keep our congregation together and how we go forward into the future, I see certain analogies.

One could say WE are at the start of a journey. We have an idea of what we think we would like to see at the end, but until it happens, we don't know if we will like it or how we will cope. However, we must remind ourselves that we have come from five different churches, each with its own traditions, ways of worship, liturgy and so on, but with each union we have exchanged our ideas and taken the best from each, and now share a strengthened bond.

As we enter the next stage of our church life, it is important that we go forward together. The journey for Dundee West may be straight forward or it may have a few twists and turns along the way, but if we support each other, pray for each other, pray for the worship group, the vacancy committee, I believe we will be given the spiritual guidance to lead us to the best outcome for our congregation.

If you think of a marathon run, your prayers are the refreshments at the pit stops that will keep this congregation going on its spiritual journey. Let's set out together.

ABBREVIATED VERSION OF ADDRESS ON SUNDAY 10 JUNE

Throughout the Bible, the varied writers display an awareness of the wonder of creation but perhaps we can appreciate their words on a scale they could never have conceived. For although we know so much more about the process of creation, each discovery prompts a new question. It increases our knowledge, but at the same time it also increases awareness of our own ignorance. We are familiar with concepts like dark matter and dark energy. These are phenomena which appear to compose more than 95% of the Universe. They must exist for the universe to be the way it is, but we do not know what they are. Truly we have reason to be even more filled with awe than those who lived in past millennia. We know we live in a creation which is not only more mysterious than we think, but more mysterious than we can possibly imagine.

What comes into your mind when you hear the word “creation.” It might be the time worn issue of science versus religion, evolution versus creation, a futile, pointless and needless struggle. On the one side there are those who cling stubbornly to a 6000-year-old earth and consider the entire biology, geology and cosmology of the last 200 years to be in error. They have allies in an outwardly more science-oriented wing, which advocates what is known as “Intelligent Design” but which is much the same concept in slightly different clothing. On the other side are the reductionists who say we are “*just an accidental collocation of atoms*” with neither purpose nor intention. The difficulty with that is the word “just.” It is true that if we were able to take ourselves apart atom by atom we would be left with a pile of fine atomic dust - all mindless particles none of which had ever been alive but which nonetheless for a period of time combine to make a living thinking human being, capable of beginning to understand and reflect upon, the universe in which he or she lives. The whole is surely infinitely more than the sum of the parts.

Many of you will have seen TV programmes hosted by Professor Brian Cox and be familiar at least in outline with the work of the physicist the late Professor Sir Stephen Hawking, whose life was a triumph of the human intellect and the human spirit. You have heard of the Big Bang, black holes, and perhaps even the latest mind-staggering speculations on parallel universes, the multiverse, string theory, wormholes and so on. When we read about the latest astronomical discoveries, or the work of the Large Hadron Collider which conducts experiments that take us back very close to the moment of the Big Bang, or when we hear of the mind-boggling behaviour of subatomic particles – have we not even more reason to express awe and amazement than the writers of past millennia.

Because although we know so much more about how the creation has evolved, it is strictly speaking an elucidation of HOW the world came into being, not whether there is meaning or purpose underlying it. However close we come to understanding the “Big Bang”, it will tell us absolutely nothing about the purpose of creation. We are still left with the question which Hawking asks in his book “A brief history of time;

“Is it just a set of rules and equations. What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe..... why does the universe go to all the bother of existing? Or does it need a creator and if so does he have any other effect on the universe?”

Professor Hawking’s view is not identical to the Christian view, but he clearly seems to agree there is a question which it is perfectly reasonable to ask.

The response of the theologian is that creation has its origin in the heart and mind of God and is sustained in being by him at every instant, not only back billions of years in the past but now, always and forever.

Rowan Williams writes *“the moment of creation is now... if, by some unthinkable accident, God’s attention slipped for an instant, we wouldn’t be here. It means that within every circumstance... God’s action is going on, a sort of white heat at the centre of everything.”*

At its outset the fourth gospel presents us with a picture of God who through his deep wisdom and reason brings the Universe into being and continues to do so at every instant. It is truly *“In him we live and move and have our being.*

Rabbi Lionel Sachs says, *“Science takes things apart to discover how they work, religion puts them together to discover what they mean.”* Viewed that way there need be no conflict.

REGISTER

DEATH

In June, Ken Gibson,

We extend our prayers and sympathy to his family and friends.

MARRIAGES

In June, Frances and Matthew and Kate and Ross. Congratulations to both couples

DATA PROTECTION

At Dundee West we hold details of all members of the congregation. These details are, Name, Address, Telephone number, email address. We will only use your details for passing on information about Dundee West, they will not be passed onto any other person or organisation.

THINGS TO DO OVER THE SUMMER

Sometimes it is easy to sit back and enjoy the Sunday Service and other events held in the church and assume some good fairy has waved her magic wand and it all ‘just happened’. Unfortunately, that is not the case. A lot of preparation and work goes into every activity.

Those of you who watch Monty Don on “Gardener’s World” will know that towards the end of each programme he suggests a list of jobs that can be done in the garden that weekend.

What about a list of jobs which could be done over the summer to help the life and facilities at Dundee West?

1. No exercise needed for this suggestion. Save the small coins which weigh down your purse or wallet and give it to the Guild. During 2017 a total of over £800 was collected from Dundee Guilds and donated to 4 local charities (£200 each). With your help we could do even better this year.
2. Give an hour or two to keep the church garden weeded and tidy. It will look so much more welcoming to visitors to the church and café, and just might make an impact on any possible candidate for our minister vacancy.
3. Offer some help in the café. We have some wonderful volunteers, but many are university students who will be returning home over the summer. Alison James would welcome some extra help. If you aren’t able to help as such, why not pop into the café for some lovely coffee and cake or lunch time snack? If you haven’t been yet, you will love it. If you have been before, you will know what delights are on offer.
4. Look through your cupboard for unused china. Stone floors and fine china do not make good companions, and there are occasional accidents and replacements are needed from time to time. We all have ‘nice china’ tea sets we rarely use. Have you any you could part with?

5. Make sure you put in your diary details of all the special service and events and try to support as many as you can. Gordon and the various church groups are working especially hard over this prolonged vacancy. Your regular attendance and support is vital to the ongoing life of this congregation.

6. Not just for the summer – could you help with the Sunday welcome door duty, donating and/or arranging Sunday flowers, or delivering the flowers to our sick and housebound members? These are all good ways to get to know better others in the congregation.

7. The Grapevine Editor is always looking for interesting articles that can be included in your church magazine.

8. Pray. We all need spiritual help as the vacancy continues, and the vacancy committee goes through the process of seeking to find a new minister. Pray for those unable to attend church. Pray for the leaders of organisations. Pray for each other that we might continue to find friendship and fellowship together as members of Dundee West.

Have a lovely summer and enjoy the sunshine and bright evenings but spare a thought for the ‘jobs to be done’.



CALENDAR

WORSHIP

Sunday 8 July	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 15 July	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 22 July	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 29 July	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 5 August	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 12 August	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 19 August	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 26 August	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service Material for Grapevine due
Sunday 2 September	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service Grapevine available

WEEKDAYS

Tuesday 21 August	: 7.00 pm :	Kirk Session
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