

NO.175

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020

GRAPEVINE



DUNDEE WEST CHURCH

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PASTORAL LETTER

Ten years to the day as I write this letter, I was given permission to train for the Readership in the Church of Scotland. Being Locum and Community Development Worker (*now for Making Dundee Home - a Dundee West initiative*) was not something that I could have contemplated, but we live in challenging times for churches and for wider society.

The Church of Scotland is responding with radical changes that are already working through to Presbyteries and will impact on local congregations. There is a shift towards growth which means people and resources will be focused more on churches and communities. There will be both church planting and church pruning. Historically churches are sometimes in the wrong place with too many in city centres when the need is in housing schemes, both old and new. The last revamp of the Presbytery plan agreed to the dissolution of St. Marys in the city centre when the current minister moves on, so changes are afoot. The Steeple itself is a church with a significant impact in the city.

There will be a large fund to assist Presbyteries and congregations to move towards growth. The focus will be on stimulating existing growth, addressing gaps and winding down what doesn't work.

For our part, we continue to look for a new minister to assist us in growing as a church as we make the best of our location and work with all the people who engage with us regularly.

Our world needs the heart of Christ bringing forgiveness and building communities for everyone. So, to those members who don't manage often to join in the activities of Dundee West, I'm always happy to provide an update as part of my pastoral role. If anyone wishes a chat do give me a phone - 07341 255354.

GORDON

THE GUILD

In September the new session of the Guild started off with bells ringing, and the second half starts on 8 January with a festive meal at Westpark Conference Centre. You can't get much better than that! (For those coming to the meal - a reminder to be there 12 noon for 12.30 pm and if you haven't paid yet, please see Jean Dorward).

The regular meetings continue on 14 January when there will be a speaker from the Crossreach telling us more about one of the projects currently being supported nationally by the Guild - *Join the Dots* - a project to tackle loneliness and social isolation in Scotland.

On 28 January a topic for historians, and Dundonians in particular, when we have Gillian Malloy from the city archives giving us the history of Dundee Street Names.

Many of you will know that Rev Jack Laidlaw, our Interim Moderator, has had a long standing interest in the Taize Community in France, and on 11 February he will tell us more of the background of the religious organisation in France.

By 25 February we will have covered food, social awareness, history and religion, and so Health and Wellbeing is the subject that evening when Joyce Barclay and Jan Goodall will give us some advice on maintaining good health and a little light exercise.

Please remember that all Guild meetings are open to everyone and we welcome visitors for any of the topics. Meetings are held in the Friendship Hall at 7.30 p.m.

CHURCH FLOWERS

A thank you to all who supplied flowers which
Beautified the sanctuary and to all gallant delivers.

The Flower Team. Best wishes. 2020

JANUARY COMMUNION

The Elders on duty are -

Wilfred Lakie

Bill Garland

Christine Sim

Lynda Ross

Donald Orrock

Frances Sturrock

Elizabeth Young

Jean Dorward

Jan Goodall

Paul Preece

Anne Wilson

SUNDAY COFFEE FUND

At the end of the year for Church finances, when income and expenses have to be tallied and reports sent to the accountants, even our modest figures for the Coffee Fund have to be accounted for. £200 was given to the Church for heating and lighting. Apart from general running expenses for Sunday coffee – eg, tea, coffee, juice, biscuits, sugar, cups – we have also supplied some cleaning materials and provided £50 for electric mixers in the kitchen.

Extra supplies were provided for concerts and Coffee Mornings, and the Christian Aid Hunger Lunch was paid for by the Coffee Fund. We also bought 26 cushions for the chairs in the Friendship Hall. Financial support was also given to a church member for conference attendance. We also provide church flowers on one Sunday in the year.

A big thank you to all the Sunday Coffee helpers who willingly give their assistance three times a year. If you would be willing to help, please talk to Elizabeth Young.

The Presentation to Ross Paton in recognition of his 40 years of service as Session Clerk took place after Morning Service on Sunday 3 November. Over 70 members of the congregation responded to the relatively short notice. Thanks are due to Anne Wilson and Alison Cruickshank in particular for providing the finger buffet and to others who assisted.

Ross Paton 40 Years Session Clerk 3/11/19

Ross retired after 40 years as Session Clerk at the end of October. For all that time and more, Ross has been an influential figure in the life of Ryehill and as Session Clerk in Roseangle Ryehill and West Church.

In the congregations in these various developments, progressions or indeed reincarnations, we have had members from a range of backgrounds and with expertise in different areas, but throughout his time as Session Clerk Ross's legal expertise has been called on whenever required. From time to time it is necessary to call on someone as a spokesperson for the congregation or at some celebration event and Ross could be called upon to set just the right tone with an excellent turn of phrase in any situation. Ross carried out his duties for Session diligently.

Recently Ross has been more based in Insh than Dundee but the Dundee connection has always been maintained.

But Ross' involvement in the life of the church has not solely been in Session. His parents were an integral part of Ryehill Church, as was Ross, and that involvement and commitment continued through union.

Ross was also a member of the choir and you could always tell the difference when Ross was there.

Ross was given a couple of small gifts in recognition of his service to the church. There was also a celebratory cake which was shared with the whole gathering.

CHURCH DATES

COMMUNION

26th January, 2020 - 11.00am

ALL WELCOME

PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY CONVERSATIONS

the last Monday of every month - up to May

27th January, 2020 - 7.30 - 9.00pm

"The Making of the Western Mind" - Gordon Sharp

SOUL-SPACE (RE-STARTING)

every Thursday - up to May

from 23rd January, 2020 - 2.00-3.30pm

(meditation & discussion as set out by participants)

THE APOSTROPHE IS NO MORE!

THE TIMES

A small army of sign writers with a loose grasp of punctuation has finally triumphed in the battle of the apostrophe!

John Richards, 96, has been campaigning for the proper use of the punctuation mark since 2001 but, as a member of the Apostrophe Protection Society, has admitted defeat.

Fewer organisations and individuals are now caring about the use of the apostrophe in the English language, due in no small way to the ignorance and laziness present in modern times.

Research upon a group of students of a certain university found that they wrongly inserted the apostrophes in plural words 13% of the time. When confronted by plural possessive phrases, such as “all the cups’ handles”, they were wrong 72% of the time.

In addition, the incorrect positioning of the humble comma in some websites is a constant irritation.

Perhaps, even among our own church members, there may be a number guilty of such errors!

But – in the spirit of Christian, as well as grammatical forgiveness - do such faults really matter? Surely the content of the whole is more important.

TOYS AND GAMES QUIZ

1. Bird of Prey
2. Named after a US President
3. Found in a single goat
4. A miniature abode
5. Said to originate from Plague of London
6. A crocodile's favourite game
7. TUBE O BUS (anagram)
8. A wasp's nest
9. Rhythm associated with jazz
10. This sounds like the only board game
11. Where is the agriculturalist?
12. Climb some, slip down others
13. Capture a rodent
14. TASK OR BEAD (anagram)
15. Medical procedure



OFFICE BEARERS ON DUTY

Sunday 12 Jan

Miss C Maclachlan

Mrs L Sharp

Mrs M Milne

Sunday 2 Feb

Mrs L Ross

J Tough

Mrs C Sim

Sunday 23 Feb

D Orrock

W Lakie

Mrs C Cross

Sunday 19 Jan

Mrs E Blair

Mrs A Almond

Mrs P Turner

Sunday 9 Feb

Miss F Maclachlan

Miss E Will

R Robertson

Sunday 1 March

J Wilson

Mrs J Goodall

Mrs C Beattie

Sunday 26 Jan

Mrs S Maclachlan

Mrs P Black

Mrs C Lakie

Sunday 16 Feb

N McGill

Mrs D McGill

Miss W Patterson

CHURCH FLOWERS

Sunday 12 January

Mrs C Lakie

Sunday 19 January

Mrs C Webb

Sunday 26 January

Mrs D McGill

Sunday 2 February

Coffee Fund

Sunday 9 February

Mrs C Cross

Sunday 16 February

Mr B Key

Sunday 23 February

Miss M McHattie

Sunday 1 March

Mrs C Sim

FLOWER DELIVERY

Sunday 12 January

Mr M Revey

Sunday 19 January

Mrs C Beattie

Sunday 26 January

Mrs A Almond

Sunday 2 February

Mrs J Hutton

Sunday 9 February

Mrs J Goodall

Sunday 16 February

Miss W Patterson

Sunday 23 February

Mrs D Taylor

Sunday 1 March

Mrs E Blair

AN OBITUARY PRINTED IN THE LONDON TIMES....ABSOLUTELY DEAD BRILLIANT!

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years.

No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,

- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepchildren;

- I Know My Rights
- I Want It Now
- Someone Else Is To Blame
- I'm A Victim
- Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing

A MODEST SUGGESTION

I often wonder if a Minister or Ruling Elder is vital to the life of a congregation.

After all, we have in all humility managed to function for a number of years as a fairly successful entity sans minister, in no small way due to the kindly guidance of what the Church of Scotland terms “An Interim Moderator”, the terminology of which might be transformed into a more permanent personage!

This brings me to question the necessity (according to those in power) of the requirement for a person to slog their way through a number of years learning to become a minister of the Gospel, in the same way as a teacher must suffer a series of subjects at some institution before embarking on his chosen career.

Age dominates the person who seeks to become a preacher. A Reader, such as we enjoy at Dundee West, may conduct most clerical duties with the exception of officiating at the Communion Service.

The Branches of the Church continue their in-fighting, and we continue to ask ourselves, ‘When will this sad state of affairs finally conclude?’

Below is my letter to Life and Work that has appeared in the January, 2020 edition. Some thoughts for the wider church to consider in changed times.

"Along with the challenges facing the church there are opportunities. For almost four years now I've been a Locum Minister, even though I'm trained as a Reader and I know from the recent Reader's conference that very many Readers are acting as Locum Ministers over prolonged periods. Most of us find this very rewarding and it's like a new career later in life. I'm also a Community Development Worker leading a church project called Making Dundee Home. This project adds to our busy café run by the church five days per week. We're in vacancy but punching above our weight as many churches and people will be doing.

"There are three things I'd like to share with the wider church through Life and Work:

- One, I take the view that Jesus was the first recorded Asset Based Community Worker as he sent folk out to create communities of healing and sharing. This was not charity – he made that explicit. They took nothing but were charged with bringing healing and sharing where it would take root.
- Two, perhaps all those with key leadership roles in the ministry of Christ should be trained in Asset-based community work and we lose the title Minister and spend much less time on theology and just live the gospel.
- Three, the Church of Scotland has an unequivocal commitment to Parish Ministry. It strikes me that we think ministry is to the church. That Ministers or people in leadership roles are called to the church. Nothing could be further from the truth surely? If the Church of Scotland is there for everyone in the Parish as Christ is there for everyone then surely all those engaged in the Ministry of Christ are called to the world (the parish), not the church. The world is our parish, the non-churched as much our congregation.

"I really believe we need to think outside the box or as Jesus said – just fish on the other side of the boat!!!"

FOR ALL THE SAINTS

All the answers for the saints' names quiz.

1. St Andrews
2. St Boswells
3. St Christopher
4. St Valentine
5. St Giles
6. St Helena
7. St Helier
8. St Ives
9. Yves Saint Laurent
10. St Bernard
11. St Louis
12. St Ledger
13. St Marks
14. St Pauls
15. St Petersburg.
16. St David
17. St Stephen
18. St Fillans
19. St Swithin
20. St Vincent

DOCTOR GEEZER

An old physician, Doctor Gordon Geezer, became very bored in retirement and decided to re-open a medical clinic.

He put a sign up outside that said: "Dr. Geezer's clinic. Get your treatment for \$500 - if not cured, get back \$1,000."

Doctor Digger Young, who was positive that this old geezer didn't know beans about medicine, thought this would be a great opportunity to get \$1,000. So he went to Dr. Geezer's clinic.

Dr. Young: "Dr. Geezer, I have lost all taste in my mouth. Can you please help me?"

Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in Dr. Young's mouth."

Dr. Young: 'Aaagh! -- This is gasoline!'"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations!

You've got your taste back. That will be \$500."

Dr. Young gets annoyed and goes back after a couple of days figuring to recover his money.

Dr. Young: "I have lost my memory, I cannot remember anything."

Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in the patient's mouth."

Dr. Young: "Oh, no you don't -- that is gasoline!'"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your memory back. That will be \$500."

Dr. Young (after having lost \$1000) leaves angrily and comes back after several more days.

Dr. Young: "My eyesight has become weak --- I can hardly see anything!"

Dr. Geezer: "Well, I don't have any medicine for that so, "Here's your \$1000 back" (giving him a \$10 bill).

Dr. Young: "But this is only \$10!"

Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You got your vision back! That will be \$500."

***Moral of story* -- Just because you're "Young" doesn't mean that you can outsmart an "old Geezer"**

Remember:

Don't make old people mad. We don't like being old in the first place, so it doesn't take much to tick us off.

ENJOY YOUR DAY!!!

P.S. Written in large print for old Geezers

GOOD NEWS FROM ABROAD!

We feel sure that all at Dundee West who had the pleasure of knowing Happy Nyirongo when he was a member of our congregation will be delighted to learn the good news of his recent engagement, and to send the couple their warmest congratulations.

CHRISTIAN AID

£50 has been sent to Christian Aid as a result of the generosity of the customers of the Church Book Stall. We hope that the stand continues to attract the attentions of readers of all tastes in 2020 and thank everyone for their support.

CHRISTMAS

In the *Grapevine* the Editorial Team asked the congregation to share their experiences of Christmas. Well, for me I particularly enjoyed this year's Christmas time. The Carol Service on 22 December sets the scene and helped to get us all into the right frame of mind with thoughtful readings and well-chosen carols. A true reminder of what Christmas is really about and not the frenzy of spending and glitter that the media would have us believe.

Then the Christmas Eve service by candlelight was, too, a lovely occasion. There were a number of visitors for the service, two of whom, along with our own Nina Allen, read the lessons. It is just so nice to have people from other denominations willing to share in our service. Of course, the traditional Christmas pies and coffee and tea rounded off the evening before we all headed home to hang up our stockings.

One of the best presents for me, however, was after forty odd years not having to cook the meal on Christmas Day! My grandson and his wife invited their families to their new home and what a wonderful time it was. Instead of rushing around the kitchen a day of relaxation, being able to sit back and watch everyone opening their presents. Lots of food, love and laughter.

Definitely, 2019 Christmas was one to remember.

WEEKDAYS

Tuesday 14 January	: 7.30 pm :	The Guild
Tuesday 21 January	: 7.30 pm :	Kirk Session
Thursday 23 January	: 2.00 pm :	Soul Space
Monday 27 January	: 7.30 pm :	P.C.N.
Tuesday 28 January	: 7.30 pm :	The Guild
Thursday 30 January	: 2.00 pm :	Soul Space
Thursday 6 February	: 2.00 pm :	Soul Space
Tuesday 11 February	: 7.30 pm :	The Guild
Thursday 13 February	: 2.00 pm :	Soul Space
Thursday 20 February	: 2.00 pm :	Soul Space
Monday 24 February	: 7.30 pm :	P.C.N.
Tuesday 25 February	: 2.00 pm :	The Guild
Thursday 5 March	: 2.00 pm :	Soul Space

REGISTER

Death

In December, Mrs M Urquhart.

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

CALENDAR

WORSHIP

Sunday 12 January	: 11.00 am :	Rev Andrew Greaves Baptism Coffee after service
Sunday 19 January	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 26 January	: 11.00 am :	Rev Jack Laidlaw Communion Coffee after service
Sunday 2 February	: 11.00 am :	Rev Jack Laidlaw Baptism Coffee after service
Sunday 9 February	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 16 February	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service
Sunday 23 February	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service Material for Grapevine due
Sunday 1 March	: 11.00 am :	Gordon Sharp Coffee after service Grapevine available

GRAPEVINE

Material for the March/April issue of the Grapevine should be with the Editorial Team no later than Sunday 23 February, for publication and uplift by the congregational visitors from Sunday 1 March.