

The Deeside Tattler

December 2021 and January 2022



St. Kentigern's, Ballater, St. Thomas's, Aboyne
with St. Ninian's, Braemar



Rector: Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock
The Rectory, 7 Invercauld Road, Ballater, AB35 5RP
Tel. No. 013397 55919 email: vittoriahancock@gmail.com

Deacon: Rev Jean Souter

Lay Readers: Stuart Yarnell, Tel. No 013397 54018

Hugh Dawson, Tel. No 013398 87054

Note: DAY OFF. Vittoria is taking Friday as her normal day off, and it would be helpful if we would respect that.

Advent Communion

Tuesdays, 10.30am, November 30th, December 7, 14, 21. St Thomas'.

Thursdays, 10.30am, December 2, 9, 16, 23, St Kentigern's

Dates for Advent

28th November, Advent Sunday

11th December, 10.30am Coffee and Cribbs at St Thomas's

12th December, 6pm, Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, St Thomas'

Wednesday 15th December, 7-9pm Zoom Christmas Catch-up – see additional details

Tuesday 18th January, 10.30am, Midweek Communion, St Thomas'

19th December, 4pm, Ecumenical Carol Service, St Kentigern's

Thursday 20th January, 7.30pm, St Kentigern's Vestry meeting.

Thursday 27th January, 10.30am, Midweek Communion, St Kentigern's

Saturday 29th January, 12-2.30, Dee-Don Group meeting, at the Rectory

Wednesday 2nd February, 7.30pm, St Thomas' Vestry meeting

From the Editor: We are moving into Advent - where has this year gone?! It has been a strange year, dominated by COVID-19, both the virus, and the fear of it changing so many things. The mask-wearing in church continues so far, and while it might make some people feel safer, it is making problems for people in church, like trying to sing, or communicate with each other, and some people are refusing to come at all until we are free of them. Nevertheless, our worship has continued, thanks to the caring and energy of our Rector Vittoria, and in response to changed needs, we have added on-line services for all members - and for the wider world.

We now look forward to the start of another Church's Year, with Advent, leading up to Christmas. Virus or not, Jesus comes into the world, the Baby who is King, and we will celebrate this in all its glory this Christmas.

We have two important changes, John Lovie has finally given up his Lay Reader ministry and we welcome Rev Jean Souter, who left us to go into her training, but now returns to us. There is more about them in the magazine, as well as several good articles. Many thanks to all contributors, as always. **Ed**

Sheila Maxwell Tel 013398 86740 EDITOR and Aboyne contact

Email: sheilamaxwell@btinternet.com

Anne Richardson, Tel 013397 56088 Contact St Kentigern's

Email: richardson716@btinternet.com

From the Rector,
Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock



Dear Friends,

I wonder if you have a special Christmas film, or book, or piece of music? Depending what mood I am in, I will either watch Love Actually or the Muppet Christmas Carol. For Christmas reading, for some reason the Canterville Ghost is my go to. I have several CD's of Christmas music and carols. I am most definitely a Christmas person. Not in terms of piles of presents or huge family gatherings. But I like the scents, the sounds, the feel of Christmas. Even better than Christmas for me is Advent. I like the slow gradual build-up, the feeling of expectation, the rituals and traditions.

My mother is likewise a fan of this season. My father, on the other hand, dislikes all the fuss, doesn't like all the people, and can't stand proper Christmas trees. For the sake of the children, when we were growing up, he tolerated all the trappings, and for love of my Mother (and fruit-cake) he copes with Christmas cake making and Stir-up Sunday. But it's not really his thing, and if the decorations go up too early or stay up too late, he tends to get a bit grumpy.

Part of the problem for my father is that he struggles with the dark and the cold, as he suffers from seasonal affective disorder. When you are struggling mentally, for whatever reason, others being bright and cheery can make you even more gloomy. Our moods can be affected not only by what happens inside our homes, but what happens outside. Like my father, for some, this season of year is the worst of times. It is cold, damp, and dark, and it can be extremely lonely. It is a time full of bittersweet memories. It is easy to hibernate away from the worst of the winter, burying ourselves inside under the blankets.

For others, the festivities of Advent and Christmas, the lights, the presents, can pull us up into a better place. This season is a season of celebration and joy. Crisp cold air brings rosy cheeks, and the darkness is a reason to light candles and fires, spreading the light further. The approach to winter brings back memories of families and friends, of laughter. Where are you at this time of year? Do you like it or loathe it?

In our churches, December marks the start of Advent, a time of preparation for the feast of Christmas. It's a time when we look to the past, to the lessons that can be learnt. When we look at the present, examining where we are in our lives, and if we are going in the right direction. When we look to the promise of the future. For people of faith, that promise is found contained in the story of Jesus, and the fulfilment of that story at Christmas. This is a story that tells of the help, hospitality and generosity of neighbours and strangers reaching out in the darkest of times. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, or even if you are unsure about faith, this is a message which still has value – that we do not stand alone in this world, no matter how alone we might feel. That we only have to reach out a hand, to speak out, and help is there. That no matter how dark the time might feel, there is still promise for the future.

It is no coincidence that the early Christians chose to celebrate the birth of Jesus at the time of the winter solstice. For them, the birth of Jesus was the turning point, when light turned to darkness, much as the winter solstice marks the point where the darkest day and longest night are over, and looks towards the lengthening of days.

There is light in the darkness, if we look for it. There is light in the darkness, if we choose to share it. There is light in the darkness, if we stretch out a hand to find it. This winter time, search for the light in those around you. Seek the good in the world. Cast out the darkness of the world by acts of love, joy, peace, mercy and justice.

The peace of this tide to you.

With every blessing,

Vittoria

Advent and Christmas Dates

28th November, Advent Sunday

12th December, 6pm, Nine Lessons and Carols, St Thomas'

19th December, 4pm, Ecumenical Carol Service, St Kentigern's

24th December, 4pm, Crib Service, St Thomas'

6.30pm, Carols around the Crib, St Kentigern's

11pm, Midnight Communion, St Ninian's, Mar Lodge (with +Bob)

11.30pm, Midnight Communion, St Thomas'

25th December, 9.30am, Christmas Communion, St Kentigern's

11am, Christmas Communion with Christingles, St Ninian's, Mar Lodge

11.15am, Christmas Communion, St Thomas'

26th December – there is no service in any of the churches.

2nd January, 9.30am, A Service of Carols and Readings, St Kentigern's

11.15am, Carol-a-long, St Thomas'



DIY Christingles

Following the success of last years DIY Christingles, we are offering them again this year. Instead of our Christingle services in church, we are encouraging you to make your own Christingles at home. You can order your very own Christingle pack by contacting Vittoria, Anne Richardson, or Sue Burgess.



Christmas Zoom Social

There will be a zoom Christmas Catch-up on Wednesday 15th December. Get ready with the drink and nibbles of your choice to catch-up with other members of the congregation online. The Zoom link is : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84412754445?pwd=c0pVRlFzYjRpdnNqaHhWU200YnB1Zz09>
Meeting ID: 844 1275 4445
Passcode: 352586



Coffee and Climate morning at Carol's

You are invited to join **Carol Simmons** at her home, **55 Charlton Crescent**, on Tuesday 4th January, at 10.30am. Come and enjoy coffee and cake, and share your ideas about how we can help to reduce global warming and climate change.
Everyone is welcome.

Mr John Lovie

John Lovie is retiring as a reader. He and Ruth are not leaving St Kentigern's. We thank him for his ministry, his wisdom and his patience among us over the last 19 years. We pray God's blessing on him and Ruth as they enter this new stage of life together.

John writes: Since 2002, I have had the privilege of serving as a Lay Reader at St Kentigern's and St Thomas's. However as the weakness of old age and poorer health advances, I feel I can no longer discharge these duties and I am letting you know that I am resigning my ministry. I wish God's blessing on you all and I thank you for your support and encouragement over the years. I also thank you for your prayers and practical support in my recent illness.

There are a few final things that I would like to say to you, as I retire. St Paul, in his letter to Timothy says "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the Faith". Obviously, I would not claim to be of the same spiritual calibre as St Paul but I have *tried* to fulfil these words as best I can and if I have succeeded to any extent, it is with the gracious help of the Holy Spirit.

However, I *do* have confidence in claiming, with St Paul the promise of the free gift of the "Crown of Righteousness" which is awarded to him, and to *all* who trust in our Lord and Saviour through His death on the Cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Another promise from God, (who never, and cannot, break His word) "Who ever believes in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting Life".

I trust these, and other similar Scriptures, bring as much comfort to you in your lives as they have brought to me.

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The Rev Jean Souter



The Rev Jean Souter has been licensed as a non-stipendiary deacon to the churches of St Kentigern's, Ballater and St Thomas', Aboyne. We will be welcoming her to our churches on the 28th November at our Advent Communion services. Non-stipendiary means that she will be working voluntarily, and not being paid. She is a permanent deacon. Some people from St Thomas' will remember her, as she was a member of the church before being accepted for ordination training. Jean will be assisting where and when she can, as her own health

allows. She is unlikely to join us every Sunday.

Vittoria Hancock



Cribs and Coffee, 11th December

As part of our decorations for Advent and Christmas this year, we are planning on decorating the church windowsills with a variety of different cribs. Don't worry, our usual church crib will be on display as well.

Many of us have cribs from round the world - I, for example, have one from Bethlehem, one from Peru, and one from Lesotho - as well as one from Woolworths! If you have one you would be prepared to lend to the church over this period for display, feel free to bring it along on the 11th December, any time between 10.30 and 12 noon. 'By a happy chance, the Carol Service will be on the following day, 12th, and will be enhanced by all the beautiful cribs on display!

Tea, coffee, cake and mince pies will be available, in exchange for a donation towards the work of Aberlour, Scotland's Children's Charity. This will be part of our giving to others at Christmas.

Feel free to pop in and admire the cribs already on display, have a chat and a mince pie.

Vittoria



New Website

Some years ago, St Thomas's established a website, drawn up beautifully by Fiona Sawyer. This was being kept up-to-date after a fashion, until Google decided they no longer supported the form it was in, and forced a change, which unfortunately has been difficult to work in by two not particularly skilled church members, Sue Burgess and myself.

The Vestry recognises that the on-line work of the church has become much more important, especially as a result of repeated lockdowns and restrictions, and has decided to move the entire website on to something more satisfactory. It is now going to be hosted by the local firm Deeside Computers, with Gordon McKnight in charge. The content will be largely based on what Fiona originally had, updated and with a few additions, and this will be prepared by Letty Scrimgeour on behalf of Gordon. They will both be available for the future to deal with any problems, or changes/additions to the material on it. This should make it much easier to keep it all up-to-date.

There is some difficulty in getting access to the current website, though it has not been taken down. When the new one is brought online, the old one will be removed altogether, and a new link will be publicised. Among other things, we will again be able to put the Tattler online in its entirety, including having the colour restored to the photos! We look forward to the day.

Sheila Maxwell

TWO DEVOTIONAL GEMS

to enjoy and give at Christmas and for the New Year

I have for long drawn inspiration and help from the writings of Henri J M Nouwen. Nouwen was a Roman Catholic priest who taught at several theological institutes. He wrote over 40 books that have been translated into more than 30 languages. He also lived with spells of clinical depression. His book 'The Inner Voice of Love, A journey through anguish to freedom' is his personal journal of that aspect of his life. Nouwen shared the last years of his life living in community with people with mental and physical disabilities at the L'Arche Daybreak Community in Toronto, Canada. He died in 1996.

Among his writings are two books of reflections for each day of the year. They are real gems.

The first book is entitled 'You are Beloved'.

This is a book in which Nouwen draws from his wide range of writings, and includes Bible references to show that our true identity as human beings is that we are loved by God. This is the identity we are called to live out in our daily lives.

As Nouwen himself wrote: 'We are intimately loved by God long before our parents, teachers, spouses, children and friends loved or wounded us. That's the truth of our lives. That's the truth I want you to claim for yourself. That's the truth spoken by the voice that says, "You are my Beloved.'

The second 'gem' book is entitled 'Bread for the Journey'.

Here are to be found 366 morsels of inspiration and wisdom on which to feast each day of the year: deep insights into the challenges and joys of life transformed in close communion with God. It is a book that deepens our love and understanding of the Bible and the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and the Church that lie at the heart of our faith and worship.

To quote Nouwen introducing this book:

'I found myself writing about Jesus, the centre of my faith. And then, to my surprise, I was asking myself, How do we become connected with Jesus? Soon I found myself writing about Word and Sacrament. But where are they held? In the Church. Where is the Church supposed to lead us? What about death, the resurrection, the communion of saints, heaven, hell, the second coming of Christ, and the end of times?... And so I wrote, faster and faster. I realized that I had 'used' the yearbook to express my faith and write my own creed!'"'

Both books are available in paperback and Kindle.

Enjoy and give to others.

Andrew Wilson

The Red Cracker

I'm just 5, and there are only four of us to celebrate this wartime Christmas day. There's my mother, my grandmother who lived with us, and my little brother. My father had been killed on active service in the RAF a year before.

Then the most wonderful surprise. My great aunt Maude arrived with a wonderful, **huge** red and gold cracker she had made, and inside were lots of presents for all of us. I was so excited, as she opened the cracker to distribute our gifts. I only remember that she gave me several small things which I treasured for years, including a miniature dolls tea set and a tiny carved elephant which I still have.

This is my only memory of that Christmas, but Aunt Maude's kindness, generosity and love stays with me. She had no children of her own, but kept house for her 4 unmarried brothers, and still made the time to create something special for us. She showed us the love of God in a very real way, especially at the time when we remember God's supreme gift to us in the birth of Jesus.

(Aunt Maude died a few months later, so this is my only memory of her, but a precious one).

Carol Simmons



St Thomas's Carol Service, 12th December

Our Carol Service is returning to the church this year, after Vittoria's magnificent online service last year. It was good to have it - but not the same as all being in church together.

The traditional Service of 9 Lessons and Carols lends itself to different treatments. We have the lessons, which tell the ongoing story of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, which is the basis for the service. The carols tell the same story, but not necessarily in such an organised way, it fills out the wonder and glory of what it all means, in all sorts of ways. It is usual for the congregation to carry this part out with their singing of many of the familiar and well-know carols.

Then there can be the extra addition to all this, the choir's contribution to the proceedings, usually with different carols, or some with more depth in their expression of the meaning and emotional content of the story. In past years, we have had a lovely group of singers, the Augmented Choir, to perform these carols for us. This year, we are still acting under government rules, reinforced by the Diocese, and so, though the spirit will be the same, the form will be a little different.

We are allowed to have singers without masks if they remain at least 2m apart, which is not easy in our church. However, we can manage up to 4 people spaced out in the chancel, which means we can manage a quartet of singers. And fortunately we have 4 people who are happy to perform in this way, Jill, Sue, Pat and Marcus Marsh coming back for the occasion. They will sing probably 3 carols interspersed among all the congregational ones, which will make for a lovely variety in the service.

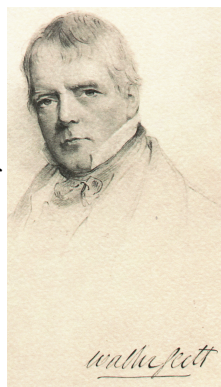
We hope that the result will be a lovely Carol Service, full of the usual joy at the coming of Christ to our midst. We hope lots of people will come to join us, and sing their hearts out, even if still through their masks!

Sheila Maxwell



Sir Walter Scott

At the end of October Sabrina and I attended a magnificent Thanksgiving Service to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Sir Walter Scott, held in St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh. The reason for our presence is that the Convention of the Baronage of Scotland were asked to nominate six Barons to take part in the procession into St. Giles', and after the Service to process down the Mound to the Scott Monument in Princes Street, as the Barons had been represented at the Centenary celebrations in 1871. The six Barons we nominated were: Ardoch, Auchtercoul (our younger son Simon), Borthwick, Craigmillar, Dinnet(myself), and Lauriston.



Sir Walter Scott



Marcus with The Chief of Clan MacLaren

Those taking part in the Procession foregathered in the splendid Parliament Hall opposite the Cathedral where we were put into order. We were led by the Lord Lyon and members of the Lyon Court in their very colourful tabards, with the bearers of the National Flag and the Royal Banner of Scotland, who were followed by Lord Bruce carrying the sword of King Robert the Bruce. The sword of the Marquis of Montrose, Sir Walter's favourite historical relic, and the sword of Rob Roy MacGregor which he had purchased in 1811, were also carried. The Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry led representatives of the Order of the Thistle, who were followed by The Lord Provost of Edinburgh, City Councillors and Officers, the High Constables, and the Senators of the College of Justice. The representatives of 28 organisations associated with Sir Walter also joined the procession including the Clan Chiefs, ourselves, and The Scottish and North Irish Yeomanry who formed a Guard of Honour. Sabrina and other wives/partners were given seats in the east side of the Cathedral, and some Dandy

Dinmont dogs, Sir Walter's favourites, were also present.

The Royal Company of Archers were on parade and gave a General Salute as we entered through the Cathedral's West Door. Prince Charles had sent his greetings and an appropriate poem of Sir Walter's which was printed in the Order of Service. After an Organ Prelude, there was a Fanfare from Berlioz' Rob Roy Overture(1831) by the State Trumpeters which was a majestic start. The Minister, the Rev. Calum MacLeod, gave the Call to Worship, and we then sang The Auld Hundredth. Zoe Drummond, soprano, Scottish Opera, sang Oh mattutini albori from Rossini's La Donna del lago, which was the first Italian opera based on a work by Sir Walter, in this case his poem, The Lady of the Lake (1810), first performed in Naples in 1819.

Billy Kay read William Laughton Lorimer's translation of John 14: 1-7, the choir sang a lovely anthem based on Psalm 116, punctuated by the occasional howl from a Dandy Dinmont, and the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry read an extract from The Lay of the Last Minstrel. Zoe sang again, this time Schubert's Ave Maria composed in 1825 as part of a setting of seven songs from The Lady of the Lake. Sir Angus Grossart, who masterminded the entire ceremony, read from The Journal of Sir Walter Scott for 22 January 1826; Lady Dorrian read from The Heart of Midlothian, and we heard a duet called Jock of Hazeldean, a piece of traditional music loved by Sir Walter. Professor David Purdie read an excerpt from Bonnie Dundee, after which Phamie Gow, accompanied by Aly Bain and Phil Cunningham, sang the ballad "To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver's who spoke" with the congregation joining in the choruses. The Very Rev. Professor Iain Torrance gave a prayer for the life and work of Sir Walter, and the service ended with the congregation singing Paraphrase 59 - Behold what witnesses unseen.. - and the Benediction. Sounds like a real Tour de Force, but in fact only lasted 45 minutes with everyone doing their part extremely well.

In the same order as before, the Procession then left the Cathedral to another General Salute and a fanfare from the State Trumpeters, and we made our way down the Mound, which had been closed to traffic, marching behind two pipe bands, to the Scott Monument, where a number of tributes were laid.

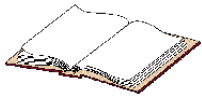
Happily the rain held off throughout, but as Sabrina had to be seated before the procession into the cathedral began, and those in the procession were in the other side separated by the high altar, she couldn't see us, but she did join the procession down the Mound, being pushed on by the detachment of horses from the Yeomanry! We all met up at the Scott Monument where there was plenty of time to meet some of the other partakers for a chat and a photo shoot!



Six jolly Scottish Barons

It was the first time I had ever worn a Baron's Robe, which had been lent by someone who was in America and fortunately is very tall, so it fitted me perfectly. Likewise Simon's borrowed robe also fitted him well. It was great fun and marvellous to have been involved in a little bit of Scotland's history and pageantry. The full service and processions can be seen on YouTube.

Marcus Humphrey November 2021



Readings for December 2021 and January 2022

5th December Advent 2	Malachi 3:1-4 Philippians 1:3-11 Luke 3:1-6	Sabine Muir	Andrew Wilson
12th December Advent 3 Gaudete Sunday	Zephaniah 3:14-20 Phillipians 4:4-7 Luke 3:7-18	Anne Richardson	Isabel Wilson
19th December Advent 4	Micah 5:2-5a Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45	Hilary Mutch	Carol Simmons
24th December Christmas Eve	Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-4 John 1:1-14	N/A	Michael Bruce
25th December CHRISTMAS DAY	Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14	Marcus Humphrey	Aboyne Family
2nd January Sunday after Christmas	Jeremiah 31:7-14 Ephesians 1:3-14 John 1:10-18	Sabrina Humphrey	Sue Burgess
9th January Epiphany 1	Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12	Stanley Ewen	Andrew Wilson
16th January Epiphany 2	Isaiah 62:1-5 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2:1-11	Margaret Jaffray	Pat Cruickshank
23rd January Epiphany 3	Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21	Anne Richardson	Anne Harper
30th January Epiphany 4	Jeremiah 1:4-10 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Luke 4:21-30	Carole Nicoll	Irene Legge

CHURCH SERVICES AT BALLATER AND ABOYNE

St. Kentigern's, 9.30am

1st Sunday	Morning Worship
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion 1982
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion 1982
4th Sunday	Holy Communion 1970
5th Sunday	Morning Prayer

St. Thomas's, 11.15am

Morning Worship
Holy Communion 1982
Holy Communion 1970
Family Communion
Morning Prayer (Matins)

Sunday Club

St. Kentigern's,

Ballater

Children are welcome to attend any Sunday Service, and families are invited to use the materials in the Hall if so required.

The **St Kentigern's Sunday Club** normally meets on the **third Sunday of every month at 9.30am** in the Church Hall. The children are brought back into Church to join their families during the Offertory Hymn.

These Services will be advertised when they have been resumed.
Anne R.

Young Church

at St. Thomas's

Children are welcome at all the services at St Thomas's. The children's corner contains books, colouring and toys for small children, so do make use of them.

Morning Worship at St. Thomas's

(on the first Sunday of the month)

This is normally a non-Communion Service, not specifically for children, but they are of course especially welcome.

Next Services will be:

5th December: Saints and Prophets

2nd January:

Carol-a-long - Carols for everyone

The Chapel of St Ninian, Mar Lodge, Braemar

Services are restricted meantime, due to Covid-19. However, Christmas will be celebrated in style.

24th December, 11pm Midnight Communion for Christmas, led by +Bob

25th December, 11am Christmas Communion

All will be most welcome at both these services

Hark! The herald-angels sing

"Glory to the newborn king;

Peace on earth and mercy mild,

God and sinners reconciled"

Joyful all ye nations rise,

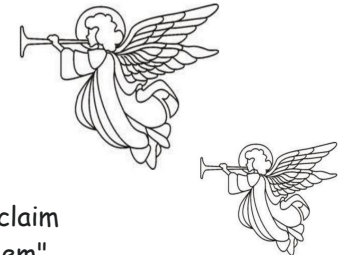
Join the triumph of the skies

With the angelic host proclaim

"Christ is born in Bethlehem"

Hark! The herald-angels sing

"Glory to the new-born king"



Youth Corner

An Angel came to Mary



The story about how Jesus came to be born of Mary is known as the 'Annunciation', which means the announcement. The story is told in St Luke's gospel, chapter 1 v 26.

This is the very start of the story of Jesus's birth that we celebrate at Christmas. Mary was living in Nazareth, and was engaged to Joseph, but not yet married to him. One day the angel Gabriel came to her there, and said 'Greeting O favoured one, The Lord is with you' Well what would you make of that?

And the story goes on to say that Mary was very troubled by this, it was not a usual greeting. But the angel went on to tell her that she would have a baby, and his name would be Jesus. He would be great, a King, and his reign would go on for ever.

Mary did not understand this, she told the angel she was not yet married and could not have a baby. Then the astonishing news came, that the Holy Spirit would come to her, and would act as Father, so to speak. So the child would also be called the Son of God. This was extraordinary news for Mary to take in. But not for nothing was she called Mary 'mother, meek and mild' Obediently she said to the angel, all right, if that is what you tell me, so be it.

But she must have been shattered, because she went straight off to see her cousin Elizabeth, who was expecting a child, to see what she had to say. We need support from someone when something big happens, don't we?

And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and knew that this was something special from God. 'God's blessing is on you' she said. And Mary at last seemed to feel the wonder of what had happened to her, and burst out - 'Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord' I expect you will recognise those words, we sing it as a hymn of joy, and this is where it comes from.

And there followed all the things we hear about - and sing about - at Christmas time. We have the birth in the stable, the coming of the shepherds and the wise men, all sharing in the birth of this baby who would become King. No wonder Christmas is such a joyful time!

Special things about Christmas:

Angels - bring messages from God (Gabriel's message to the shepherds, Luke ch 2 v8)

A Star - shows the way to Jesus (Read Matthew ch2 v1)

Lights and candles - remind us that Jesus lights our way to God (Read Luke ch2)

Presents - What would Christmas be without presents! They remind us of God's special gift to us - Jesus. We read of the Wise Men's gifts (Read Matthew ch2 v10-12)



Colours



Scarlet leaves on the Acer
some lying like a skirt on the grass
The end of the leaf year
It began in April, delicate folds of green

All around are the signs
of Autumn, yellows, oranges and reds
Some will stay in the hedges
others are blown covering
paths, lawns and flowerbeds

Whatever the year will bring
snow, ice, frosts and rain,
In Spring new life will return
and trees will be coated in a gentle green
Except the fir which enjoys the winter
A dull green for most of the year

Christmas brings a transformation
Lights, tinsel and coloured baubles
A star on top, symbol of the star
In the east many years ago

Irene Legge



Christmas Quiz

The quiz with the unusual answers

- 1 Why are robins shown on Christmas cards?
- 2 Why is the mistle thrush so named?

Rodney Heslop

Answers 3 pages ahead



BASS NOTES

Making Insulation Interesting

‘Just the thing to assuage climate change – glue your left ear to a motorway and lie there. It’s a bit chilly, but you’ll get plenty of warmth from all the burly policemen who will drag you off the road as your heels scrape the tarmac, and plenty of noise from the angry motorists playing bagpipes in your right ear. The ambulance guys will make sure your left ear isn’t left behind. Left behind? Now there’s another thought....’

So runs page two of the campaigning booklet of Insulate Britain, a group dedicated to making sure we are all aware of the impending disaster of man-made climate change.



I’ve made that up, of course, but if we all insulate our homes properly, we are doing a little bit to protect the planet: sometimes simple things are best. Having lived in Orkney for many years I know how important that is. There, you need to wrap up warmly in winter, not so much because of cold (frost is quite rare) but because there tends to be a bit of wind from time to time. It can scream at 80 mph into

every crevice that you thought you had sealed with your woolly jersey, warm hat and robust underwear. The same goes for your home. Our Orkney home was a nineteenth century stone-built structure with all that that implies in terms of winter gales and unprotected gaps. When we first acquired it, it was falling into serious disrepair. The roof leaked generously, there was more than a suspicion of rot and the plumbing was, well, let’s say not quite up to modern standards. We left the big structural jobs to a local builder who was not just a builder, but someone who became a good friend over the many weeks he spent rescuing the house from terminal decay.

As we worked our way through the smaller internal jobs, floorboards inevitably had to be lifted from time to time, and it was beneath them that we discovered the Victorian systems of insulation – not just thick stone walls, but between floors a system of noise insulation consisting of lots of ash from long extinguished fires.

In the twentieth century, sound insulation in the house had been improved still further by the addition of newspapers and magazines under the boards. These proved to be a

treasure trove of how life was in the 1940s and 50s – one *Sunday Post* centre page from 29 June 1952 hangs on a wall at home. The first thing that strikes you about that page is the fact that there are no photographs. We obviously read less and demand more photos in 2021. The second thing is the number and diversity of the headlines packed together in small print. Here are a few of them. Decide for yourself how much has changed:

Stalin May Retire this Year

Who will succeed the rascally old dictator?

Flower That Cures The Cold

The benefits of mayweed.

Four Signs That Tell If Heart Trouble’s On The Way

The ‘Doc’ depresses you with health warnings

All Through Tuesday Night

Hundreds of railwaymen the length of Britain heave a sigh of relief as the Queen’s overnight train pulls safely into Edinburgh’s Princes Street station

Have You Ever Heard Anything So Silly?

A Glasgow man’s heart-breaking 8-year struggle with Glasgow Council to be allowed to rent a ground floor flat for his disabled wife.

They Come From All Over the World to Hear a Dog Speak

Eat your heart out, Esther Rantzen. Archie! Get your act together.

There’s more, much more, but these examples give you a flavour of what I can enjoy each day simply by glancing at my wall.

When we moved to Aboyne, we searched in vain for insulation under our floorboards, but we were astonished to discover a couple of dusty bottles of quality wine hidden there. So, over to you. What interesting treasures are lurking in your insulation? Just don’t glue your ear to the road.

Merry Christmas and a well-insulated New Year.

Eric Sinclair

News from Aboyne-Dinnet

On Thursday, 13th January, 12.30 to 14.30, the Guild are planning a soup lunch and social in the Church Hall. (donations) All are welcome.

As numbers are slightly restricted, please could anyone interested let Lorraine know. email: lorrainevsimpson@googlemail.com

We hope to restart the ever popular Ladies' Breakfast in March, and there will be more information in due course.

The Friendship Hour based in the Resident’s lounge at Bonty Court is starting again. The first meeting will be at 2pm on 1st December. Anyone who wants to attend will need to contact Bonty Court and give them their name.

Little Donkey - A Christmas memory

A long time ago, more years than I care to remember, when our girls were at school at Towie and were growing up, we had a Church of Scotland minister and his wife living in the Manse at Glenbuchat looking after the parish of Towie and Glenbuchat. The Reverend Gilmour, a very nice man, who decided that this Christmas we should have some Carol singers so with the help of his elders he succeeded in getting some drivers to take the singers round the parish and persuaded people both young and old to gather together and sing.



We were very lucky to have May Keir who brought along her accordion and armed with a sheet of paper with lots of carols printed on it so off we set at 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve with a collection tin in about five or six vehicles including the school bus, landrovers, estate Volvo and cars, all round the parish up and down, in and out, of many farm roads. We heartily sang all the carols, but a firm favourite was Little Donkey and we were very well rewarded at different houses with mince pies, sausage rolls, chocolates, sweets, tea, coffee and mulled wine.

However when we stopped at Kirkton, in Glenbuchat to sing Little Donkey, we had just about finished when all of a sudden we heard a "Hew haw! hew haw! hew haw!" from a donkey, all fell about laughing, children and adults alike, thought it was the funniest thing even if it was very appropriate. We continued on our way everyone giggling and laughing ending up at Glenbuchat church for the midnight service. After the members of the congregation were told about 'Our Donkey' everyone had a smile on their face. What a lovely way it was to welcome Christmas, a truly happy and worthwhile way to spend Christmas Eve. This tradition continued for a good few years, but we never ever heard another donkey singing!

Eileen Davies



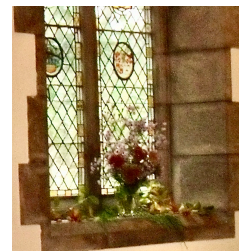
Answers to the Christmas Quiz

2 The bird is particularly fond of mistletoe berries. These are sticky and the thrush cleans its bill on a tree branch. Some of the seeds germinate and the plant gets the water it needs and some of its food from its host, usually an apple or lime tree. Mistletoes grow in England.

1 This was inspired in Victorian times by postmen. They wore red waistcoats and were nicknamed 'robins'.

Rodney Heslop

Harvest at St Thomas's



The Harvest Festival was celebrated in some style at St Thomas's this year, in spite of the current regulations, and with a larger congregation than there had been for a while. The well-known Harvest hymns, including of course 'we plough the fields and scatter', were sung with gusto from behind the masks, with only one choir member singing from the front and so allowed to take her mask off. The regular choir are still not in action, but Jill and Sue sang the harvest song 'Brambles', my setting of one of Vittoria's poems.

There were the usual vegetables and fruit to celebrate harvest, but we wanted to give to the Foodbank, so the main contribution was a table full of tins etc that could be given to those who need it, and although not the traditional harvest, it is much more useful, giving what is really needed.



After the service, tea and coffee was served, along with abundant supplies of Cake. Thanks to all who provided this. And it was good to have a chance to socialise together over it.

Sheila Maxwell

Bell ringers of the future?



It was lovely to have a few children at the Harvest service. Here we have the complete Rider family in action - if you look carefully between John's legs, you will see a small child sitting comfortably! While Mum is dutifully at the kitchen sink, John and the children, Archie, Teddie and Connie, are given a lesson in bell-ringing by Warren, our bellringer-in-chief.

We expect great things at some time in the future!



Celebrating the Epiphany

The feast of the Epiphany, celebrated on the 6th January, is when Christians celebrate the visit of the wise men to Mary, Joseph and Jesus in Bethlehem. Epiphany means 'revelation' or 'manifestation of a divine being'. This is the day when Christ is revealed through the wise men to us, when their gifts foretell his future, when the journey both ends and begins.

Epiphany lies at the end of the 12 days of Christmas. It's time to move on from the baby to the man Jesus. A time to put away the Christmas decorations for another year. How can we celebrate this feast amongst our families and friends?

Bless the Home (and the Church).

There is an old tradition called 'Chalking the Door'. Epiphany is used as time to ask God's blessing on where we live and work. We mark our doors with chalk, usually the front or main entrance, as we ask God's blessing upon those who live, work, or visit throughout the coming year. The names of the wise men are traditionally known as Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. During the chalking ceremony, the first letters of these three names — C, M, B — are inscribed on the door frame, or on the lintel. It has been suggested that the C M B may stand for "Christus Mansionem Benedicat," meaning "May Christ bless this dwelling." The letters are written between the numbers of the year of the blessing. This year would be 20 C M B 22

Decorate for Epiphany.

The tree comes down, the stars go up. Twinkling lights along the mantelpiece. Stars hanging in unexpected places. Scented candles of frankincense and myrrh. Colours of gold and purple. A perfume bottle and an incense burner. Crowns and camels. A map of the night sky. The crib stays up for another week, to give the wise men a chance to enjoy their visit!

Bake a cake to share A tradition associated with Epiphany involves hiding small items in cake. Sometimes these would be small beans - whoever found them would be king of queen at the feast. Sometimes a gold coin would be added to the mix. In some countries a 'Christ Cake' would be made with a small pottery or plastic figure of Christ baked into it. Whoever found the statue would be especially blessed throughout the coming year. Whether you just bake a cake to celebrate – with appropriate decorations – or put beans in it to find (make sure they can't be easily swallowed) is up to you. There are specific recipes for Epiphany cake available on-line. You could throw a party, finishing with everyone helping to strip the Christmas tree.

Read a different version of the story.

Try the 'The Greatest gift: the story of the other wise man', by Susan Summers, 'The Camel who found Christmas' by Alexa Tewkesbury, or 'The Road to Christmas Day' by Jan Godfrey and Marcin Piwowarski.

In memoriam

Elizabeth Millership died in November. We give thanks for her life among us.

We mourn with her family and friends, and pray that God may be with them..

The Rev Canon Patrick Jones died in September. We remember his service to these churches and give thanks for his ministry.

Congratulations

Eric Sinclair, prolific writer of Bass Notes for the Tattler, and many other places besides, has been awarded a Distinction for his efforts in the first year of a post-graduate course in Creative Writing with the Open University. Congratulations to him - and we will look forward to even more stunning articles from him in the future!

Memories of Patrick

Rev Patrick Jones was Rector of St Kentigern's and St Thomas's from 1984-1994. So he was the Rector when I first came to St Thomas's, and he was the one who brought me back to the church after years in the wilderness. The occasion was Matins - and I felt I had come home! I was of course brought up with Matins and Evensong and loved them (and still do!). But there was also the warmth of Patrick's welcome, and indeed of the whole church.

He was very traditional in his services, which suited me at that time, and he was very caring and conscientious. I remember cold winter evenings when he would come over to Aboyne to take Bible Studies, often in Di and Derek Lloyd's home. It was also during his time that I started playing the organ - very nervously!. He would choose the hymns, *Patrick with young Sam* and I remember phoning him to see what they were, and hearing gales of laughter from him and Winifred, which left a warm feeling.

Sheila

Sue Burgess has found this photo of Patrick in action, christening her son Sam, in May 1994 - a special day for her and Warren. Patrick is fondly remembered.



Christmas stamps -

Jane went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards.' What denomination?' asked the clerk. 'Oh! Good heavens! Have we come to this?' said Maria, 'Well give me 50 Methodist and 50 Church of England ones please.'

Rev'd Vittoria Hancock normally says the daily office of **Morning Prayer** on Monday's at 8.30am in St Kentigern's, and on Wednesdays at 9am in St Thomas's, - meantime discontinued. It lasts about 15 minutes, and anyone is welcome to join her.

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Pastoral Cards for the sick or bereaved

We have a small selection of very helpful pastoral cards, which are suitable to send from the Church to anyone who is sick, going into hospital, or bereaved. They include appropriate readings and prayers. Recipients have commented on the encouragement and comfort these cards have brought them.

If you would like a pastoral card sent to a friend from:

St Thomas's, Aboyne
Please contact Meg White
Tel 013398 80034

St Kentigern's, Ballater
Please contact Doreen Ewen
Tel 013397 55538

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WEB-SITES

St Thomas's Web-site is meantime being transferred and upgraded. The new link will be publicised when it is available. Meantime if you want to get in touch, please email:

stthomasaboyne@gmail.com

St Kentigern's Web-site is:
stkentigernballater.aodiocese.org.uk

Prayer Chain Ministry

"Devote yourselves to prayer,
being watchful and thankful."

Colossians Ch 4 v2

A small group meets for prayer as requested. The group prays for anyone who requires it, which may be for healing, guidance, strength in a difficult situation or for thanksgiving.

Prayer can be for yourself or for someone else (with their permission). Confidentiality is maintained at all times.

The group members are eager to be contacted at any time for prayer, visitation or simply for a listening and sympathetic ear.

Please consider joining us in the uplifting and essential ministry of prayer. We really need as many as possible to support our Prayer Group.

Doreen Ewen Tel 013397 55538

Doreen Ewen (tel 013397 55538)

Important

The Tattler needs you!

Please send news, articles, stories, fillers, or anything else you can think of to enrich the Tattler. It can only be as good as you make it!

The next Edition is starting now.
Please give or send all contributions to the Editor,
or to Anne Richardson at Ballater,
by January 18th

CONTACTS :

Treasurer
Secretary
Lay Representative
Vestry Members

Sacristan
Assistant Sacristan
Organist
Youth Leader
Child Protection Officer
Chalice Bearers

Secretary
Treasurer
Lay representative
Vestry Members

Organist and Publicity
Child Protection Officer
Sacristan and Altar Guild
Chalice Bearers
Flowers
Rector's Warden
People's Warden
(Maintenance Officer)
Patron

Dr Hugh Dawson:
Astrid Cheyne:
Anne Richardson

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Hilary Mutch
Joy Harvey
Margaret Jaffray
Amanda Kentish
John Lovie
Sabine Muir
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Hilary Mutch
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Anne Richardson

Roger Searle, Mary Fennell, Marcus Humphrey,
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Anne Harper
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Daphne Laing
Sheila Maxwell
Katherine Rider
Carol Simmons
Lesley Thomas
Sheila Maxwell
Lesley Thomas

Irene Legge, Daphne Laing, Jo Elson
Warren Burgess, Peter Sowrey

Jill Binns
Daphne Laing
Warren Burgess

Michael Bruce

ST. NINIAN'S

Lay Reader, Treasurer, Organist
Flowers
Child Protection Officer

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: Michael Adie John Lovie

