

The Deeside Tattler

February and March 2025



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



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

Midweek Communion

Tuesdays, St Thomas', 11.30am, February 18th, March 11th, 18th, 25th,
April 1st, 8th, 15th
Thursdays, St Kentigern's, 11.30am, February 27th, March 13th, 20th, 27th,
April 3rd, 10th

Dates for the diary

Sunday 2nd February, 9.30am, Christingle and Candlemas, St Kentigern's
11.15am Christingle and Candlemas, St Thomas
Wednesday 5th February, 7.30pm, St Thomas' Vestry meeting
11th February, Provincial Mission and Ministry Board Meeting, Edinburgh
1st March, Diocesan Synod, Aberdeen
5th March, Ash Wednesday
11.30am, Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes, St Kentigern's
6pm, Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes, St Thomas'
6th March, 7.30pm, St Kentigern's Vestry meeting
30th March, 10.30am, Joint Service for both churches at St Kentigern's,
followed by bring and share lunch
18th April, Good Friday
20th April, Easter Sunday

From the Editor: We are now in the depth of winter, with all its usual ups and downs. We are between the busy seasons of Christmas and Lent, and there is perhaps time to pause for breath and just "be"! But we do have our Christingles to look forward to, taking place at the feast of Candlemas, and hopefully some children will join us for this celebration of Light.

Our magazine this time has even more than usual in the way of accounts of activities in our churches, and it is great to know there is so much going on. A good number of photos have been sent, more than could be used but all lovely. We have done our best to display them in the black and white of the magazine, but they will also appear in the St Thomas's web-site in the original colour. Do have a look! (The link is <http://www.stthomasaboyne.org>)
Our thanks as ever to all the contributors, the magazine would not flourish without them. So do keep them coming! **Ed.**

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From the Rector,
Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock



Dear Friends,

The snow is falling outside the window as I write this. It all looks very artistic – like being inside a snow globe, watching it whirl and dance around. My Christmas decorations are put away in their boxes for another year, and the Epiphany ones are up. I have a collection of different decorations and ornaments for the high days and holy days of the church year. Come Candlemas, out will come candles galore and dove decorations. One of the crafts I have done in previous years to mark Candlemas has been to decorate jars with various motifs. I have also made candles out of beeswax sheets. And the food for Candlemas is usually pigeon pie (or if you can't get hold of pigeon, chicken). Then on Ash Wednesday, the Lenten decorations replace the Candlemas ones. White and gold changes to purple and sackcloth.

You may think all this is a bit over the top. You wouldn't be the first to think that. So why do I do it? It serves to remind me that my faith needs to be as much the faith of my home as the faith of the church. That what I do, think, say, should connect home and church. That my faith should be integrated in all of my life. When we start to compartmentalise our faith, when we only allow it to affect part of our lives, if we restrict it to an hour or so on a Sunday morning, it starts to become irrelevant. Living our faith should flow through every part of our lives, including our homes and relationships.

The variety of feasts and festival serve another purpose. They remind me of the story of faith. The various feasts and festivals of the church year highlight different aspects of the Christian journey. The lives of the saints have things to tell us about how to live – and how not to live – our lives. They connect us to the stories of the past, and from them we can gain encouragement for the future.

There is nothing new under the sun – even it was expressed in different ways. St David, the patron saint of Wales was a man of great stature, is known to have worked great acts and performed miracles. Yet for him, in his last words to his followers, it was just as important to 'Be joyful, keep the faith and do the little things for God '. Do the little things for God.

As we approach the season of Lent, I will be pondering in what small ways I can make a difference to the people around me. What small things can you do?

With every blessing,

Vittoria

Joint Service

At our last joint vestry meeting, your vestries decided that it would be good to hold a joint St Thomas / St Kentigern's service twice a year, followed by an early bring and share lunch.

The first joint service will take place in St Kentigern's on Sunday 30th March at 10.30am. Please put the date in your diaries and support this event.

Vittoria

Lent Course

In this year's Lent course, we will be looking at the 'I am' sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of John – 'I am the bread of life', 'I am the door', 'I am the true vine' and so forth.

The Lent course will be held in person on Tuesday evenings during Lent (11th, 18th, 25th, March, 1st, 8th April) starting at 7.30pm. There will also be a zoom option for anyone who wishes to join us that way. All are welcome.

Lent giving to Foodbank

We will again be giving donations from our churches to the Foodbank in Banchory. This is part of the Trussell Trust, and gives to people in temporary but desperate need.

All donations, of dried or tinned food and toiletry will be welcome.

There will be boxes in both churches during Lent for your donations.

Dates for the Diary

Sunday 2nd February, 9.30am, Christingles and Candlemas, St Kentigern's

11.15am Christingles and Candlemas, St Thomas

5th February, 7.30pm, St Thomas' Vestry meeting

Sunday 16th February Hot chocolate Walk meet at 2.30pm at Tarland

18th February, 11.30am Holy Communion and Soup Lunch, St Thomas's

27th February, 11.30am Holy Communion and Soup Lunch, St Kentigern's

5th March, Ash Wednesday

11.30am, Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes, St Kentigern's

6pm, Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes, St Thomas'

6th March, 7.30pm, St Kentigern's Vestry meeting

11th March, 11.30am First weekly Lenten Communion & Soup Lunch, St Thomas's

7.30pm First weekly Lent Course meeting

13th March, 11.30am First weekly Lenten Communion & Soup Lunch, St Kentigern's

16th March Hot chocolate walk - venue to be decided.

30th March, 10.30am, Joint Service at St Kentigern's,
followed by bring and share lunch

17th April, Maundy Thursday

18th April, Good Friday

20th April, Easter Sunday

Soup Lunches

Our soup lunches provide a free, warm space in which to socialise as we eat together. They take place on the same day as our midweek communion services, from 12-1pm. Anyone is welcome to join us for some friendship and food. You do not need to be a member of a church – just turn up. If you have any special dietary requirements, please let Vittoria know in advance – you can email her or phone her.

Hot Chocolate Walks – These are gentle strolls in the company of others to a point of interest. If the weather is wet, snowy or horrible, we stay firmly at home. Feel free to join us, bringing with you your hot chocolate, or another beverage of your choice.

On Sunday 16th February we will be having another go at walking out from the Square in Tarland to Tomnaverie Stone Circle We will meet in the square at 2.30pm. If you would like to join us but cannot walk that distance, you can park at Tomnaverie and just do the short stretch up to the stone circle.

There will be another walk on 16th March – venue to be decided. Any suggestions for short, non-taxing walks with a feature of interest along the way, let Vittoria know.

St Hilary and his poetry

In the last edition of the Tattler, we had a piece about the importance of St Hilary in the early fourth century church. This included his fight to acknowledge the importance of the Trinity to Christians, the belief in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is still the basis for our thinking today, but led him to a period of exile.

It was during this time in exile that he spent time in Asia Minor, and got to know the hymns of the Eastern Church. He began to compose hymns of his own, in Latin of course at that time, and he was regarded as the pioneer of Western hymnody, along with Ambrose, who lived at the same time.

It was the practice, in those early days, for the Scriptures to be sung or chanted to teach people the faith. Following on from this, St Hilary would write non-scriptural poems to be used in the same way. He especially used them against what is known as the Arian heresy, or the belief that Jesus was made or created by God, and so was not actually one with God.

Very little of his work survives, but we still have his Latin 'Lucis Largitor Splendide', one of the earliest known Latin hymns.. It was written for his daughter to recite every morning. She wanted to marry her suitor, but St Hilary thought Christ should be her only suitor, and she should only marry Him. The hymn was given to her to help her and encourage her to embrace a life of chastity.

The first verse of the Latin hymn is: Lucas largitor splendide, cuius sereno lumine
post lapsa noctis tempora dies refusus panditur

There are various translations of the Latin. This one, used by the choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, seems to bring out the meaning of the poem as well as any:

O blest creator of the light,
a light that is serene,
now that gloomy night has passed
your brightness fills the skies again.

You are the world's true Morning Star,
not that which dimly in the night
heralds the coming dawn
and shines with only narrow light,

But brighter even than the sun,
the purest Light and Day,
enlightening with your blazing ray
our inner hearts and minds.

And the poem ends gloriously with:

All glory be to Christ, our King;
All glory to the Father sing,
Whom with the Paraclete we praise,
Forever and for endless days. Amen.

Aboyne Medical Practice Patient Participation Group

We are most fortunate in Aboyne and Tarland to have a first rate primary care service provided by the Aboyne Medical Practice. Just over a year ago the Practice looked to form a Patient Participation Group, which is now fully functioning.

In an effort to Inform all registered patients of the potential benefits the PPG can bring to patients and the Practice, we are reaching out to as many local community groups and organisations as we can. You may have seen articles in the local magazine the "Fountain" or leaflets in The Medical Centre or the local Pharmacy.

The Aboyne Medical Centre website has detailed information on the services provided and other aspects of health care including the PPG who post regular Bulletins. Below you will see an introduction to the PPG which I hope you find of interest.

Alan White PPG Vice Chair



Working together for the health of the community

In common with many other medical practices, Aboyne Medical Practice has a PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG). We are volunteers, all of whom are registered patients or staff at the Practice. Our aim is to work together with the Practice to help the

Practice better understand the needs of the registered patient community and deliver services in a way that meets those needs. We provide an easy and safe way for patients to share their thoughts, ideas and feedback with the Practice.

We are a friendly group of people of all ages who care passionately about the range and quality of primary care services available to the local community. We have regular meetings (normally quarterly) and these include both the Practice Manager and Practice Partners.

Our Aim The aim of the PPG is to;

- Provide a channel for the transfer of information between the Practice and its registered patients.
- Provide a forum where patient concerns can be raised and addressed and where patient appreciation can be passed on.
- Support the aims of the Practice in the community.
- Communicate improvement ideas and suggestions from registered patients to the Practice.

Get Involved

New members are most welcome. No previous experience is required but a common sense, positive, practical and people friendly approach is most welcome. Everyone is encouraged to speak up at meetings and offer their ideas, thoughts and opinions.

If you are currently a registered patient at Aboyne Medical Practice, are over 16 years of age and are interested in joining the PPG or just finding out more, please contact us on gram.aboynepatientparticipationgroup@nhs.scot

CONFIDENTIALITY - The Aboyne Patient Participation Group (PPG) will never have access to any clinical records or any other form of private patient information. Any information shared by the Medical Practice with the PPG is non-patient specific and will remain strictly confidential within the PPG. Members of the PPG are bound by the confidentiality terms as is defined in the PPG Constitution, a copy of which is available upon request. School's Christmas service



School's Christmas service

As always,, St Thomas's was beautifully decorated for Christmas, with the usual Christmas tree from Glen Tamar, looking brilliant with its lights and decorations.

Everything was in place to welcome the Aboyne Primary School pupils for their Christmas Service, where we sang favourite carols for children - Little Donkey, Away in a Manger and We Will Rock You.

We had three groups from the youngest to the oldest and everyone received a wooden snowflake tree decoration to take home to remember the occasion. It was enjoyed by everyone, including the adults!

Finance notes from St Thomas

The end of 2024 was marked by several lovely church occasions – the ecumenical Carol Service, the Crib Service on Christmas Eve, Midnight service and Christmas Day – all well attended. As well as the worship, all these services help to raise much needed funds for the church and together made about £650. Many thanks to all involved.

The outside stonework cleaning and repointing was also completed and in the wintry sunshine, the granite certainly shines. We are grateful to several donors who contributed financially to this work.

2025 brings new opportunities for individuals to reconsider their financial stewardship to the church, either for regular costs or for special projects. If anyone would like to discuss their contributions, please contact Sue Burgess.

Forthcoming events at Aboyne-Dinnet

6th February, 7pm Guild meeting; Professor Cairns Smith will address us about where we are with the struggle against leprosy, and his work. All welcome, entry by donation

14th February, 6.30pm in the Church Hall Valentine-themed Quiz Night and Supper. We will not have Stovies, but there will be a savoury buffet during the interval (sausage rolls and sandwiches etc.). Tickets £10, proceeds for a special person. Contact: Christa Tel: 86562.

6th March, 7pm: Guild Evening; Rev Sharmann Maromo will address us on the theme Zimbabwe to Aboyne. All welcome, entry by donation

Sarah Wright

Carols round the Crib



The St Kentigern's crib service was held on Christmas Eve. The service was very well attended and joyful, with a lovely atmosphere, with lots of participation from the congregation. On entering, people were handed nativity characters and animals.. Vittoria told the story of the Grumpy Innkeeper, and as it progressed, covering all the Christmas stories, people came and laid their characters in the stable, It was an amusing and fresh way to tell the old story.

The church was beautifully decorated by some of the ladies



On the way out, people were handed a snowflake to hang on their tree to remind them of the meaning of the service.



Decorating the candles for Advent

Advent at St Thomas's was celebrated this year with a Family Service which included another of Vittoria's innovations. Rather than simply lighting the Advent candle, we had the making of the Advent wreath and decorations by the whole congregation as part of the service. It was very informal, fun to do this together, and a great sense of fellowship at the beginning of the serious season of Advent. (We were reminded in the Reflection that this is a time of preparation, Christmas is not yet)

The end result was some lovely decorations, particularly for the Advent candles,, and a happy congregation returning to their seats, ready for the culmination of the event, the blessing of the Advent candle. And the first verse of the Advent wreath song was sung.

There will be more candles to light, and more verses to sing, throughout Advent, before we come to the great feast of Christmas.



The congregation at work!



*The Advent candles
ready to be blessed*



Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas starts for many people when they attend this wonderful service, where the "the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus "is told to us in 9 Bible readings (this year this included one lesson read in Doric) interspersed with congregational singing of well known and loved Carols and also with Anthems and Carols sung by the choir- some of which may be new to the congregation .



At St Thomas's this year we were blessed with a beautiful service on the 3rd Sunday of Advent with a full church made up from friends from all the local churches. Our choir were joined by Lucy Bailey and the members of the Augmented Choir and ,as always their singing filled the church both with joy and worship.

John Goss was the Victorian composer of the choir's first anthem- although his name may not be well known to many he was in his time a well known organist at St Paul's Cathedral and writer of much Church music including " See Amid the Winter's Snow". He was also choir master to a young Stainer while a chorister at St Paul's.

One of Peter Warlock's most well known carols is the beautiful Bethlehem Down and this was the choir's second anthem. Composed in 1927 it had a rather questionable reason for its creation!- The poet Bruce Blunt and Peter Warlock had need of finances to fund Christmas 'celebrations' and decided to write a carol for a competition run by the Daily Telegraph and they won! Although Warlock was not a religious man he was thought to like Christmas and despite this being written for financial reward it has been said to be one of his finest choral works.

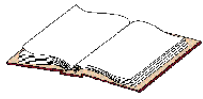
We were treated with two modern carols, in the tradition of 9 lessons and carols- The first by Thomas Hewitt Jones(born in 1984)-the very lovely and gentle 'Christmas Lullaby' and the second by our very talented organist Sheila Maxwell with her stunning carol - 'New Life.'

Thomas was winner of BBC Young Composer of the Year competition in 2003 and is now well known for both his church music and secular work, including film scores. He is a well known name on Classic FM radio.

We are so fortunate at St Thomas's to enjoy fine music under the direction of Sheila Maxwell . She works tirelessly to enhance our service with the best of choral and organ music and her own compositions are an important part of this .

We concluded with some welcome refreshments provided by Lesley and Jo, and a chance to chat to each other.

Carol Birss



Readings for February and March 2025

2nd February Epiphany 4 Candlemas	Malachi 3:1-4 Hebrews 2:14-18 Luke 2:22-40	Sabine Muir	Rider Family
9th February Epiphany 5	Jeremiah 17:5-10 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 Luke 6:17-26	Anne Richardson	Warren Burgess
16th February Epiphany 6	Genesis 45:3-11, 15 1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42-50 Luke 6:27-38	Hilary Mutch	Isabel Wilson
23rd February Epiphany 7	Exodus 34:29-35 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2 Luke 9:28-36	Stanley Ewen	Christopher Heald
2nd March Epiphany 8	Exodus 34:29-35 2 Corinthians 3:12 – 4:2 Luke 9:28-36	Margaret Jaffray Ewen	Rider Family
5th March Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1 -2, 12-17 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6.10 Matthew 6:1-6,16-21		Andrew Wilson
9th March Lent 1	Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Romans 10:8b-13 Luke 4:1-13	Susan Smith	Jill Binns
16th March Lent 2	Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 Philippians 3:17 – 4:1 Luke 13:31-35	Marcus Humphrey	Meg White
23rd March Lent 3	Isaiah 55:1-9 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Luke 13:1-9	Sabrina Humphrey	Sue Burgess
30th March Lent 4 (Joint Service)	Joshua 5:9-12 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	Anne Richardson	Michael Bruce

CHURCH SERVICES AT BALLATER AND ABOYNE

	<u>St. Kentigern's, 9.30am</u>	<u>St. Thomas's, 11.15am</u>
1st Sunday	Morning Worship	Morning Worship
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion 1982	Holy Communion 1982
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion 1970	Holy Communion 1970
4th Sunday	Holy Communion 1982	Family Communion
5th Sunday	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer

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 materials 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.

The next services are:

2nd February
Candlemas and Christingles

2nd March
Do the little things

A Hymn for Lent

O Jesus, Thou hast promised
to all who follow thee,
that where Thou art in glory
there shall Thy servant be;
And, Jesus, I have promised
to serve Thee to the end:
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend

J.E.Bode (1816 - 74)

From the Bible for the young and not so young



Peter the Apostle - another Angel story

Peter was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and one of the most important and colourful people who appears in the New Testament. He was also one of those to whom an angel came at a crucial point in their lives, in a graphic story told in the Book of Acts (*ch.12*)

Like many others in the Bible, he was no saint, he sometimes failed badly. His worst time was when he denied all knowledge of Jesus after His arrest by the Pharisees. Then after the Resurrection, he was confronted by Jesus, who asked him three times if he loved him, to Peter's increasing anxiety. "Lord, you know that I love you." Then Jesus said to him "Feed my sheep". And to this, Peter devoted the rest of his life.

The disciples received the Holy Spirit, as promised by Jesus, at what we call Whitsun, and this galvanised them into activity, spreading the word about Jesus, and His saving of all who believed in him. But this was not all plain sailing. Jesus had been crucified by the Jews who hated him for speaking about a different way of life, different laws, and a King who was a servant. They saw this as a threat to their way of life, and so the Christians were persecuted for their faith. Peter was now a leader in what at times was a very dangerous mission.

There came a period when particular violence erupted against the Christians. Herod the King killed James, brother of John, and arrested Peter. It was the time of the Jewish Passover, and he had Peter held until this was past, before he could have him brought out for a trial by the people. Peter was meantime held in two chains, and made to sleep between two soldiers, with sentries at the door to prevent any escape. He would be an important part of Herod's fight against the hated Christians.

The church was praying earnestly to God for Peter. Then on the night before his expected trial, an Angel appeared to Peter, a light shone, and the Angel woke him, told him to get dressed, put his sandals on, wrap his coat round himself, and follow him. Peter could not make out what was going on, he thought this must be a vision. But he followed the angel, past the two guards, through the iron gate which opened miraculously before them, and into the street, where the angel left him.

Coming to himself, Peter realised that God had sent an angel to rescue him. He went to a house where people were gathered together praying. But his troubles were not quite over. He knocked on the door, but when the maid came to answer, and realised it was Peter, instead of opening the door, she ran in with joy to tell everyone that Peter was there - and they did not believe her! So he had to keep knocking until someone came. When they eventually did, Peter told them all to keep quiet, and described how God had sent an angel to get him out of prison. But he did not stay there, we are just told he went to another place.

And in the morning, when they found he had gone, we are told that 'there was no small stir among the soldiers' But that is another story.

Snowfall

The snow falls gently
Dancing in the air
Outside the window
Slowly carpeting the ground
With a layer of white
The snowdrops fight back
Struggling to keep their heads up
Until giving way to the weight
They bow them in submission
Stillness falls
Sound is deadened
And in the moon-light
A sheen on silver glistens

Vittoria Hancock

Nature's Bewilderment

2025 is only just over two weeks old, but for the natural world it could seem much longer. One can only imagine how utterly bewildering the sudden abrupt changes of temperature must be. A snow-covered world with a temperature of minus 10.6 degrees centigrade was replaced by an entirely green covered one of plus 13.3 degrees two days later.

The birds largely lost interest in our offerings, though the unknowing moles burrowed relentlessly on. They appeared unmoved, one felt, by the change, and unwanted molehills appeared from nowhere. Above it all the moon waxed gently on, more beautiful than ever and heralded by astounding sunsets.

I think a lot of people will have found "comfort and joy" in this wondrous beauty.

Jane Kruuk

Cat in the snow at New Year -
at one with the beauty of the scene

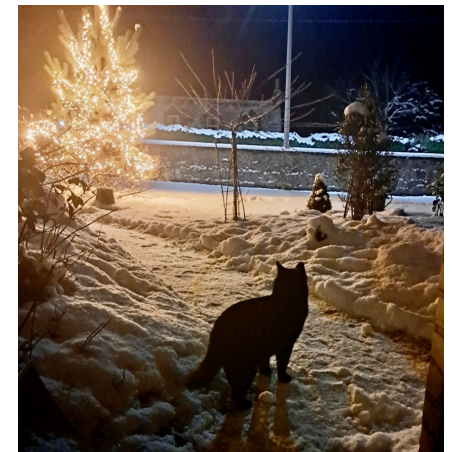


Photo by Helen

On the impossibility of keeping silence in church

The Rectory
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

Your remark that you rather liked the silence we keep before starting Services gave me pause for thought. I suppose all things are relative. I know that the noise your congregation makes before worship resembles a packed stand on the football terraces any Saturday afternoon, but the days seem long-gone when I could expect our congregation to sit in real silence for ten minutes.

There's the sound of the treasurer counting the previous day's jumble sale takings, of the ladies at the back asking each other when the fish van will next come round, and of Major Hastings's deafening whisper as he comments some women's choice of hats. Add to this the weekly competition between the organist and the bell ringers to see who can make the most noise, the roar from the choir vestry as they all complain they don't like my choice of hymns and the sound of books, umbrellas and collection money being dropped. I sometimes suspect that an informal rota is arranged whereby people volunteer to drop heavy objects in rotation, thus maintaining a constant clatter, for which no single person can be held responsible.

There is also the weekly ritual when the verger – always waiting until the church is full – goes round each microphone, giving them a bash and bellowing “Testing, testing” and relishing the echo as it bounces off the walls.

The only time the noise level drops significantly is if the congregation see Miss Simpson sidle up to me to have one of her confidential little chats about someone in the village. Everyone knows that her information will provide more than enough to keep gossip flourishing for the following week.

Equally, periods of silence during Services are rarely welcomed; some find them threatening, but the majority simply assume it means I have lost my place. I gave up after one occasion when, on announcing we would say the Lord's Prayer and then leaving a time of silence for recollection, a choirman leaned over to me and whispered helpfully: “It begins ‘Our Father’”

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

(Written by the Rev Dr Gary Bowness for the Parish Pump)

Cow and choir

From a Cambridgeshire local newspaper in January 1900:

‘WANTED – a steady respectable able man who can look after a garden, milk a cow, and sing in the church choir.’

A Prayer for Lent,

Disturb us, Lord

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true
Because we have dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when
With the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst
For the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas
Where storms will show Your mastery;
Where losing sight of land,
We shall find the stars.
We ask You to push back
The horizons of our hopes;
And to push into the future
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

*Attributed to Sir Francis Drake, 16th Century
(from the Parish Pump)*

Planes, trains and automobiles

Has anyone seen that movie? With Steve Martin and John Candy? Well, I'd like to add ferries to it to fully describe our Christmas travels!

Best laid plans and all that....

We set off in our camper van towards Cairnryan to stay overnight and catch the early morning ferry for our Christmas trip to family in Ireland. With no phone signal as we went over the Slug, we arrived at the dual carriageway to a text message. We knew that there was a big storm brewing, and therefore it wasn't a huge surprise to read that our ferry on Monday before Christmas was cancelled. We stopped in a lay-by to regroup and eventually turned around and came back home.

We managed to book last minute a flight from Aberdeen to Dublin the next morning, had to do some serious repacking down to 1 suitcase, drove in the car and parked up in the long stay. Everyone was delighted we made the effort and it was lovely to see all Warren's brothers and vast families. Ate too much as usual and lots of chat - a great crack as they would say.

Home for one night and then I set off by train to Norfolk to see my brother and wife - the trainline to Edinburgh is always a joy along the coast and the spectacular bridges over the Firth. After that, it all went a bit haywire - a train ahead of us broke down and we sat for over an hour at a tiny station called Recton? in the middle of nowhere while the network organised a one-way system around the train. A 2 hour delay necessitated a train change at York and a different train from Peterborough, but the bonus was that the journey was/is going to be refunded (still waiting for that).

I was more fortunate than one of the other passengers - she wanted to catch the ferry to Amsterdam from Newcastle, but we didn't get there in time, and the next one available to her was going to be into the New Year, so she got off and sorted a train back to family in Aberdeen for another 5 days - a whole day spent on a train, to end up where she started!

Still - a great New Year in Norfolk seeing family and friends. Then home for another day and off to Switzerland to ski for a week - at least that was the plan, It worked for Warren and the snow was great and very pretty - unfortunately I fell on the first day, got an amazing black eye and partially tore a small knee ligament so was signed off skiing for the week. Time to chill and enjoy the view, the company in the evenings and some great food.

Moral of this story - things may not always work out the way we think they will, but where there's a will there's a way, and someone has a plan for it all. I met some new people (camaraderie in unusual situations) decided to enjoy the adventure and the unpredictability, stayed calm and as a result had a lovely time, ready to face the New Year.

Warren and Sue



Early Flying experiences



Reminiscing again about our travels, I opened an old album from our posting in Nigeria. As I looked at the advert for our flight it struck me that today one never sees the plane itself advertised. On that occasion the new VC10 emphasised the most comfortable economy class seats in the world, the cabin quietness, the restaurant quality food. What's more, it was just as advertised!.....and the fare was only £101.



Lunch, served on crockery, was Devon Spring Chicken, with Gateaux Majestic for a dessert. Cigarettes were 2/6 for 20, whisky to take off the aircraft was 12/6 a bottle; Now those were the days!

My homeward journey 18 months later was on board the BAC1-11, the "bus stop" aircraft, with stops at Accra, Freetown, Bathurst, Las Palmas and Lisbon. In those balmy days we stopped flying at 5pm and retired with the crew to a Las Palmas hotel for dinner and a night's stay, continuing our flight at 9.30 am.

Going on to another old album- this time a flight out to Hong Kong - and once again BOAC advertised their exquisite meal service. This time dinner was fillet steak on a Boeing 707 with only eight passengers! I'd marked the album with the comment "best flight ever" due to the space available.

As the years passed and we graduated to Club Class travel, I note that British Airways Club World offered a wider selection, with seafood terrine, grilled noisettes of lamb, Chinese style pork or poached fillet of salmon on their lunch menu on the way to Kuala Lumpur.

It's a long time since we last flew anywhere, but from the press reports nowadays, airline food has deteriorated massively. Perhaps the end of cheap travel will bring the return of luxurious dining to the skies for all who fly.

Peter Sowrey

The Great Outdoors

Actual comments left on US Forest Service registration comment cards

by backpackers:

"Too many bugs and leeches and spiders and spider webs. Please spray the wilderness to rid the area of these pests."

"Trails need to be wider so people can walk while holding hands."

"Escalators would help on steep uphill sections."

"Trails need to be reconstructed. Please avoid building trails that go uphill."

"A McDonald's would be nice at the trail head."

"The coyotes made too much noise last night and kept me awake. Please eradicate these annoying animals."

The Silver Circle



I've joined the Silver Circle, it's taken me a while
To change Wednesdays into days of fun, it really makes me smile.
The staff are oh so lovely and show they really care
And pick me up from my front door in their car to take me there.
The welcome that is given when we walk through the door
Coffee, tea and fine pieces, oh! Who could ask for more?
It's so nice to have a blether with friends both old and new
Then try some different projects if that's what you like to do.
The meals that they supply are extremely good
With no cooking and washing up or even preparing food.
There's always something going on to make us smile or grin
Like art, music, talks or Bingo when everyone joins in.
On Fridays there's the shopping bus for those who care to go
To supermarkets in Huntly, Alford, Aboyne, and Ballater also.
I went on the summer outing in an enormously huge bus
Up the Lecht and over the hills where the Heather Centre welcomed us.
A lovely lunch was provided and enjoyed by one and all
Then we toured around the garden taking care not to fall.
Another fly-cup was given just before we made away
With bus boot crammed with plants and flowers after a really super day.
We visited Garlogie for our special Christmas lunch
Enjoyed ourselves and had fun time with this lovely lively bunch.
There's so many names to mention but I dare not leave anyone out
So forgive my old brain, you know who you are I've no doubt.
So here's to the Silver Circle, our thanks to everyone of you
Wishing you a Happy Christmas, we appreciate all that you do.

Eileen A. Davies 18/12/24

Congratulations and Commiserations

Baptism

Bonnie Graham was baptised at St Thomas's on Christmas Day
Please pray for her and the family.



For Doreen

Your physical presence has gone
But our precious memories live on
When a word, a smell or a sentence
Bring back a very strong remembrance
Now we can laugh
When once we cried
The sound of geese in their arrow flight
Reminds us of that night
When you went to a different place
This time apart is fleeting
Until we have that longed for meeting.

Hugh Dawson

From the Book of Proverbs, chapter 31

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.
She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.
Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

WEB-SITES

St Thomas's Web-site has been transferred and upgraded. It has also been possible to return the photos in the Tattler to their original colour. The link is <http://www.stthomasaboyne.org>

If you want to get in touch, please email: stthomasaboyne@gmail.com

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

Some services are recorded at St Thomas's. The Youtube Link is: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.thomaschurchaboyne>

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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 Sabrina Humphrey
Tel 013398 85233

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.

Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock

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 March 14th

CONTACTS :

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Lay Representative
Vestry Members

Sacristan
Organist
Youth Leader
Child Protection Officer
Chalice Bearers

Secretary
Treasurer
Lay representative
Vestry Members

Organist and Publicity
Child Protection Officer
Sacristans
Chalice Bearers

Flowers
People's Warden
(Maintenance Officer)
Patron

Dr Hugh Dawson:
Astrid Cheyne:
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ST. KENTIGERN'S

Marcus Humphrey
Sabine Muir
Hilary Mutch
Sabrina Humphrey
Margaret Jaffray Ewen
Sabine Muir
Anne Richardson
Susan Smith
Hilary Mutch
Stanley Ewen
Anne Richardson
Anne Richardson
Roger Searle. Marcus Humphrey, Susan Smith,
Douglas Mutch, Sabine Muir

ST. THOMAS'S

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Sue Burgess
Anne Harper
Warren Burgess
Sheila Maxwell
Katherine Rider
Carol Simmons
Lesley Thomas
Sheila Maxwell
Lesley Thomas
Carol Simmons, Jo Elson, Lesley Thomas
Warren Burgess, Peter Sowrey, Lara Elson
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