

# The Deeside Tattler

April and May 2025



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**  
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**Lay Reader: Hugh Dawson, Tel. No 013398 87054**

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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 Communions**

Tuesdays, St Thomas', 11.30am, April 1st, 8th, 15th  
Thursdays, St Kentigern's, 11.30am, April 3rd, 10th, 17th

#### **Holy Week Services and Events**

Palm Sunday, 13th April, 9.30am, Holy Communion, St Kentigern's  
11.15am, Holy Communion, St Thomas'  
Tuesday 15th April, 11.30am, Lent Communion followed by soup lunch, St Thomas'  
Maundy Thursday, 17th April, 11.30, Holy Communion and stripping of the altar followed  
by soup lunch, St Kentigern's,  
6pm, Holy Communion and stripping of the altar, St Thomas'  
Good Friday, 18th April, 12-1pm, Ecumenical Service for Good Friday, Glenmuick Church  
2-3pm Prayers and Readings for Good Friday, St Thomas'  
Easter Saturday, 19th April, 7pm, Easter Vigil and Bonfire, St Thomas'  
Easter Day, 20th April, 7am, Sunrise Service, Sluievannachie, followed by breakfast at  
Glenmuick Church  
9.30am, Easter Communion, St Kentigern's, followed by Easter Egg hunt in the grounds  
11.15am, Easter Communion, St Thomas', followed by Easter Egg hunt in the grounds

**From the Editor:** It is a great sadness that we learned that our much-loved Rector Vittoria Hancock has resigned from her charge. She will be with us through Holy Week and the great festival of Easter, then her last services will be the following week, at the end of April. She will take a well-earned Sabbatical for at least a month, finally leaving the area after that.

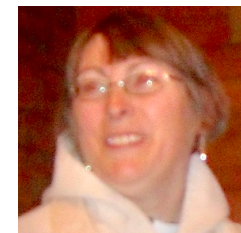
She will be much missed, but the life and worship of St Kentigern's and St Thomas's will go on. People leaving from high places often speak of the 'legacy' they will leave behind. Vittoria does not talk about such a thing, but we know ourselves what her legacy must be, strong communities that she has built up over the last 11 years, continuing with our worship, and working to lead the sort of Christian lives that she has been encouraging us to live all this time.

We can expect a long-ish Interregnum, one day we will welcome a new Rector, and meantime this magazine will continue to reflect the work and worship of our churches, as well as any other thoughts, memories etc that come to mind, that people are willing to share. Without this, there can be no magazine! **Ed**

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From the Rector,  
Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock



Dear Friends,

As you will have heard by now, it is with sadness that my final Sunday in these charges will be the 27th April - although I will remain your Rector in name while I am on sabbatical in May. As part of the process leading up to this decision, I have spent time reflecting on the promises I made when I was ordained, and when I was installed as your Rector. This year marks 24 years since I was ordained a deacon, and 23 years since I was ordained a priest. You never stop being a deacon when you are priested. That ministry remains with you. With the emphasis in the Scottish Episcopal Church being so much on Eucharistic worship, we are sometimes in danger in forgetting the value of the role of deacon - when we speak of ministers, our minds often turn first to the priestly ministry. We forget that all priests are also deacons. Once a deacon, always a deacon. The primary duty of a deacon is that of service to the congregation and the community.

Service is often undervalued, being expressed often in tasks that get overlooked, or are seen as menial. Washing-up. Putting the rubbish out. Cleaning the loo. Making soup. One of my female clergy colleagues was heard to say that she would never do the washing-up, as that was what seemed to be expected as females. In doing so, it struck me that she was avoiding a vital part of her vocation. Acts of service are things that contribute to the well-being and running of the community - whether your own family, the church community, or the communities in which we live and work.

I view service as a key part of my calling in Upper Deeside, and I have attempted to, wherever possible, and in whatever way is most useful, to serve you. As I prepare to move onwards from here, this is the first thing I would encourage you to do - to love one another through service. Whether that service is in making tea and coffee, having a chat with someone who is struggling, being involved in running services, or helping to move chairs. St David put it this way 'Gwnewch y pethau bychain' "Do the little things".



I am secondly called to be a priest. The priestly ministry builds upon those acts of service, and adds to it. Being a priest is not just about doing, however, but about being. Through the lives we lead, we are expected to point to Jesus and encourage people to show love and compassion and to build the Kingdom of God. We are called to share people's joys and sorrows as we walk with them on their journey through life. You may wonder why I am using the word 'we'. As Christians, we are all called to part of the 'royal priesthood'. 1 Peter 2: 9 says 'you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light'. While I may have been called and set apart to work in this role, this calling is for all of us. We are all called to love, to point to Jesus, to share in the joys and sorrows of those we meet, to point the way to God. We are called to do this not just in our words, but in our actions. This is a ministry which you are all called to share in. As you look to the future, I pray that you will grow in love for each other and for the communities in which you are placed.

I have loved being in this place, with these people. I have sought to love and serve you, and have been loved and served in return. For that I am profoundly grateful to you all. For your support, patience, and tolerance. I have not always succeeded in my calling to love and serve, but I have tried. I ask that you be as generous in forgiveness towards each other as you have been towards me when I have got things wrong. I am leaving you all with regret and reluctance, but knowing that it is the right thing to do at this time. We are still in Lent – this is a very late Easter this year. One of the key verses which we hear at the beginning of most Lenten periods is from Micah 6:8:

**“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love with mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”**

As we look to the future, wherever that may take us, I commend this verse to you.

With every blessing,  
Vittoria

## Dates for the diary

30th March 10.30am, Joint Communion service at St Kentigern's, followed by coffee and cake. Please note, there will be no service in St Thomas' on this date.  
6th April, 6pm, Music and Readings for Passiontide, St Thomas'  
23rd April, 7pm, Joint Vestry meeting, St Kentigern's  
27th April, Vittoria's final services  
8th May, 7.30pm, St Kentigern's Vestry meeting, Ravenswood  
24th May, 2pm at the Millenium Gate in Aboyne, History Walk led by Anne Harper.  
Joint event with St Thomas's and Aboyne-Dinnet Church  
28th May, Memorial service for the late Mary Fennell, St Kentigern's  
29th May, 6.30pm Vittoria's leaving party, Rhu-na-Haven. Congregations from both churches are invited, please contact Sabrina Humphrey for more details  
21st June, St Kentigern's Church Fair

## Lent Communions

St Thomas', 11.30am, 25th March, 1st, 8th, 15th April  
St Kentigern's, 11.30am, 27th March, 3rd, 10th, 17th April

## Soup Lunches

St Thomas', 12-1pm, Tuesday 25th March, 1st, 8th, 15th April  
St Kentigern's, 12-1pm, Thursday 27th March, 3rd, 10th, 17th April

Subject to volunteers to make soup, it is hoped to have a soup lunch in St Thomas' on 13th May, and in St Kentigern's on 29th May.

## Lent Course 'Who am I?'

Our Lent course continues on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm, in person at the Rectory and on zoom. The last evening will be on 8th April. You are welcome to join us at any time, you do not need to have attended the rest. The theme this year is the I am sayings of Jesus. We are looking at what they can teach us about God, his relationship with us, and our relationships with each other.

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## General Data Protection Regulation - important!

Under the data protection regulations, the churches cannot legally keep your information on file unless we have permission to do so. If you have not returned a data protection form, or have been unable to fill it in for some reason, please contact Vittoria giving her permission to keep your details on file. Many thanks.

**Vittoria Hancock**

## Lent Appeal - Wild Things



Our Lent appeal this year is for the local charity Wild Things. Wild Things is an award winning environmental education charity working in Aberdeenshire, Moray, and the Highlands.

Wild things helps to facilitate a mutually beneficial relationship between local communities and their natural environments. They engage with some of the most vulnerable members of society, from children and young adults to older people, including care home residents.

Regardless of age and ability, Wild Things believes in the transformative and therapeutic power of nature.

Since 2003, Wild Things has enabled over 36,000 children, young people and adults to learn from and be inspired by their local natural environment. They pride themselves on bringing nature experiences to all areas of the community.

Projects they run include a Woodland Classroom, where children can learn about nature and the environment.

Also important is the Silver Saplings Adventures (SSA) programme aimed at improving the well-being of older people living in rural parts of the North East of Scotland.

Their work aims to improve well-being, community engagement, development of social ties and improved social cohesion.

You can learn more about their work on their website: <https://wild-things.org.uk>. Lent offering envelopes are available at the back of church.

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### Aboyne-Dinnet Church with St Thomas's

At the end of May we look forward to a joint History Walk led by Anne Harper. This walk will be for the congregations of St Thomas's and Aboyne-Dinnet churches and anyone else who would like to come along. The date is Saturday, 24th May, and we will meet at 2pm at the Millenium Gate in the village.

This is a re-run of the walk Anne took a couple of years ago for the Victory Hall Open Day and is at the request of some of us who didn't manage to make it then. The subject is 'Roads, Mills and Railway, how Aboyne Developed'.

Afterwards those who fancy a cup of tea/coffee and biscuits are invited to come to the church hall. The walk will take approximately 1 hour.

There will also be a joint Vigil as usual on the evening of Easter Saturday, at St Thomas's Church

## Stewardship

**"For all things come of thee, and of thine down have we given thee"**

*1 Chronicles 29:14b*

I'm not sure where it came from but I have "The Vestry Resource Guide" from the Episcopal Church USA, and it is interesting to read the section on stewardship. In what may be some challenging times ahead for St Thomas and St Kentigern, I thought it might be helpful to consider some of the guidance given and reflect on how each member of the congregations can contribute towards the missions of our churches – not just in financial terms. It will take more than one Tattler to reproduce this, so here is episode 1 of a series.

The basic stance of a Christian toward God's Creation should be that of a steward. Time, Talent, and Treasure are entrusted to individuals and to communities with the understanding that each will be held accountable. Stewardship can be understood as

"all that we do, with all that we have, all of the time" It is about intentionally committing ourselves consistently in all parts of our lives – much more than my annual requests to think about your financial contributions.

The Scriptures say and imply that all that we have comes from God. For what we have been given, we thank God, we gather for worship, we pray "give us this day our daily bread" and "we give thanks for these gifts which we are about to receive" In addition, we give our time and our money to advance the work of God in the World. This spirit of giving is part of our covenant with God.

When we give it is done in celebration of what we have received, whether it is a king's ransom or a widow's mite. We should offer our resources with a mindset of abundance and not of scarcity, believing that is an honour to give to God, that in Giving, we are not "Giving away", rather because the congregation is "church" – a place where we gather to do God's work. We have to think how God would use these resources. Stewardship goes beyond our giving of time, talent and treasure. It also includes how we manage those things.

Episode 2 next time about managing resources.

**Sue Burgess**

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## News from Aboyne-Dinnet

This year's Daffodil Coffee morning will take place on **Saturday, 5th April**, in the church hall between 10am and noon. Tickets are £5 which includes refreshments. There will be the usual stalls and attractions. Tickets will be available at the door.

Our Ladies Breakfast & Talk season starts on **Saturday, 10th May**. The venue will be the church hall, and the Continental breakfast starts at 10am. Our speaker will be Elizabeth Percival of Aberdeenshire Council who will tell us about Refugees in Aberdeenshire. Anyone interested should contact Christa on Tel.: 86562.



## Memories of Aboyne

### 1. The Forties

As a family coming to Aboyne in 1940, we were Eastenders and close to great places to play. Nearest was the stone water-powered well below our house, The friendly miller, covered in flour, looked like a ghost. Wheels turned, belts clattered. Sometimes we spotted our cat Smoky, the place was hotching with rats and mice. Hours of fun. Then, despite porridge and a big cooked breakfast, hunger reminded us of our strict order to be home promptly for lunch.



A little farther away we found an ice house in the Castle Woods, shaded by trees. The entrance faced north, and on the lintel above it the builder engraved the year the house was built, in mid-Victorian times. Steps at the side led down, down, down to the bottom of a deep cavern. Mr Middleton of East Mains told me that as a boy, pre-First World War, he saw carts laden with ice cut from Aboyne Loch, a marsh dammed by the estate. In the heat of

summer, he added, there was still enough ice for ice-creams from the Castle's kitchen.

We had fun making a shelter in the woods, and beyond explored the castle, which was deserted and free from the eagle eyes of the village bobby. Rickety wooden stairs led up and up. Our very own castle.

School for us was on the village Green, where Miss Grieve's class was a gentle introduction. Miss Reid in the next form was much stricter. We became fluent in Doric, and switched instantly to it from our English dialect. For me, this was useful in later life.

**Rodney Heslop**

### March Hot Chocolate Walk

Six walkers from St Kentigern's and St Thomas's, led by Vittoria, had a great walk today. Intrigued by Rodney's tale of the Castle's ice house, we went exploring in the woods surrounding Aboyne Castle to find it. Despite walking in the woods over the years I had never heard of this feature! It is always fun to discover new places.

The ice house is well hidden in the wood and is now covered by a wonderfully mossy roof. A sizeable granite, barrel-vaulted building, which in its day must have had a large capacity to store the Castle's ice, brought from Aboyne Loch in the winter months. Above the entrance of the ice house we saw the carved CEA~ 1827- the initials of Charles, 6th Earl of Aboyne. Although the entrance is now closed by a grill, it is possible to see into the building and see the steep stairs which would have had to be taken to get to the bottom of this very deep store.

We celebrated our find by sitting on the mossy roof and enjoying hot drinks and cake before returning to the church another way.

**Carol Birss**



## February Hot Chocolate Walk

Despite a cool and drizzly day 9 walkers and a dog from Aboyne and Ballater had a wonderful afternoon walk in Tarland. Originally we had planned to walk to the standing stones of Tomnaverie but because of the weather we altered our route and walked through the pretty woods surrounding Alastrean House. Signs of spring were around us with buds appearing on many of the trees and masses of snowdrops gracing the woods. There were even daffodils appearing in bud among the snowdrops!

A fun game of Pooh Sticks brought much laughter before heading for the warmth of Tarland Tearoom where there was much chatter and drinking of Black Forest Hot Chocolate and teas. A really great afternoon with good company.



If you have never been on one of these walks do consider joining us. The walks are short and easy but the company is great!



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## Hot Chocolate Walks

The final hot chocolate walk led by Vittoria will take place on Easter Monday at 2.30pm. This will be a slightly longer walk (although still fairly gentle) from St Kentigern's to the remains of St Nathalan's Chapel, on the old House of Glenmuick Estate. The chapel was built as a private place of worship for the estate and was largely demolished in 1948 when the mansion itself was demolished and the estate abandoned. Only the tower is left standing and it is now surrounded by thick tree cover and largely hidden from view. The altar from the chapel is now in St Kentigern's church, along with the candles and cross, and various other items. Feel free to bring a beverage of your choice (and possibly an Easter egg to munch on!).

As usual, if it is lashing down with rain, snowing a blizzard or blowing a hoolie, we stay at home. No endurance test is needed. Taking part in this walk is at your own risk. Please come suitably dressed with appropriate footwear.

## Easter chocolate dilemma

364 days of the year we tell our kids: "Do NOT eat anything you find on the ground, or anything from strangers!"

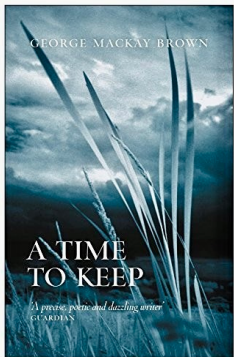
On Easter morning we tell them: "Why don't you go outside and search in the dirt for chocolates that a strange giant bunny has left for you?"



# BASS NOTES

## A Time to Keep

It's a strange thing coming out of hospital after a long incarceration there. In my case it was three and a half months followed by a period of rehabilitation – still ongoing. Some people have it much worse, of course, and at least I came out, even if somewhat weaker and less mobile than when I went in. As an in-patient you grow used to a daily routine set firmly around the shifts of medical staff, fixed meal times and other routines centred on the various treatments to deal with your 'issues'. Time is no longer yours to control.



There is a wonderful short story called *A Time to Keep* by the Orkney writer George Mackay Brown which centres on the life of an Orkney crofter, Bill, and his wife, Ingi. Ingi dies in childbirth. There is a memorable scene in which a grief-stricken Bill holds up the new-born baby to a wild oncoming sea, in a cross between a kind of do-it-yourself christening and a windy, salty introduction to the harsh world the unfortunate child has entered. This was one of the more literary images that occurred to me as I lay in my NHS bed, trying desperately not to think of what was going on at the time. I am a strange person.

The title of the story is inspired by words in Ecclesiastes from the King James Bible with which you're probably familiar:

*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.*

As humans we are freely given a certain amount of time to do with what we can. In hospital, however kindly the health professionals, however jolly or miserable your fellow patients, however lucky you are to have visits from friends and family and flowers from St Thomas's, time can hang heavy on your hands.

In hospital, there is, to paraphrase Ecclesiastes, a time to eat and a time to sleep; a time to preserve modesty and a time to forget there is such a thing as modesty; a time to receive treatment and a time to wish fervently you weren't receiving treatment; a time to buzz for a nurse and a time when it's best not to buzz for a nurse; frequently a time to forget and rarely a time to keep.

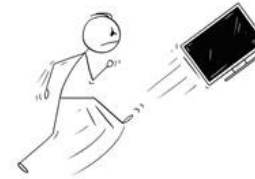
And then you re-enter the 21st Century from the parallel universe of hospital, having forgotten that modern life, too, is another strange universe to which you have lost the key, the passport and the visa along with all your digital passwords, and you must speak to humourless AI robots to get them all back again.

'Good morning. Welcome to our helpline. Please speak clearly'

'I can't seem to get into my email account'

'You're having a problem with your email. Is that right?'

'Yes. I've just come out of hospital and I've lost my password and.....'



'Please answer yes or no.'

'Yes'

Please answer this security question. What was the name of your first pet?'

'Hamish.'

'I need to check you are who you say you are.'

'I no longer know who I am...'

'I'm sorry, I don't understand those words. You need help. I am going to transfer you to one of our friendly experts.'

'But....'

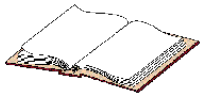
Line goes dead.

A time to laugh?

I fear you already know the alternative to laughing.

**Eric Sinclair**





## Readings for April and May 2025

30th March Lent 4 (Joint Service)	1 Samuel 1: 20-28 Colossians 3:12-17 Luke 2:33-35	Anne Richardson	Michael Bruce
6th April Lent 5	Isaiah 43:16-21 Philippians 3:4b-14 John 12:1-8	Sabine Muir	Rider Family
13th April Palm Sunday	Zechariah 9:9-12 Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 19:28-40	Margaret Jaffray Ewen	Anne Harper
20th April EASTER SUNDAY	Isaiah 65:17-25 Acts 10:34-43 Luke 24:1-12	Marcus Humphrey	Aboyne family
27th April Easter 1	Acts 5:27-32 Revelation 1:4-8 John 20:19-31	Anne Richardson	Christopher Heald
4th May	Acts 9:1-6 Revelation 5:11-14 John 21:1-19	Susan Smith	Rider family
11th May	Acts 9:36-43 Revelation 7:9-17 John 10:22-30	Sabrina Humphrey	Anne Harper
18th May	Genesis 22:1-18 Acts 11:1-18 John 13:31-35	Stanley Ewen	Jill Binns
25th May	Ezekiel 37:1-14 Acts 16:9-15 John 14:23-29	Hilary Mutch	Meg White
1st June	Ezekiel 36:24-28 Acts 16:16-34 John 17:20-26		

### 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:

**6th April:** Love and Passion

**4th May:** Gone Fishing

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Jesus said "I am the gate. Whosoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture" *John 10.9*

#### ***A Prayer:***

Lord,  
You called Jeremiah to the gates (Jeremiah 17.19):  
draw us, like him, to the margins,  
to new places where our certainties crumble away,  
our hearts are opened  
and we are to live by faith alone.  
Grant us your grace that we might  
abide always in your promise,  
walk always in your peace,  
and enter through the living Gate,  
even Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen  
' *from Tales of a Country Parish by Colin Heber-Percy*

## From the Bible for the young and not so young

### Abraham and Isaac - the testing of Abraham

It all started because Abraham wanted an heir who would follow on from him, and have his possessions and his lands after he had died. But he was very old now and his wife Sarah was childless. So Sarah took pity on him, she said that although she could not have children, she had an Egyptian servant who could give Abraham a child if they got together. So this happened, and the servant, called Hagar, had a son called Ishmael. But it was not as simple as that, Abraham realised he really wanted a son by his wife Sarah. There were a lot of difficulties, as so often in the Old Testament stories, but eventually God provided Abraham and Sarah with their own son, Isaac.

The complications also included the local King of Gerar, who was tricked into thinking that Sarah was Abraham's sister, not his wife, and so free for him. In the end, Abraham and the King Abimelech made up their grievances, and made a covenant, or understanding, between them at Beer-sheba. Throughout, God had been with Abraham; now, Abraham called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God.



And it was after all this that God decided to test Abraham and see if he had genuine faith and trust in Him. He called Abraham, and told him to go with his only beloved son Isaac to the mountains and offer the Lord God a burnt offering. So early one morning, Abraham took Isaac, and another two young men for support, and they travelled to the mountain. Eventually Abraham saw the place he was looking for. He told the young men to stay put with the ass, he

would go and worship, and come back to them.

Then he took Isaac, carrying some wood, and the fire and a knife. Young Isaac asked his father, where was the lamb for the offering? And Abraham just said 'The Lord will provide'. But when they arrived at the place and had the wood arranged for the fire, Abraham took his son and bound him and laid him upon the altar of wood. And he held up his hand holding the knife ready to kill his son for the sacrifice.

But then, just at the last minute, an Angel of the Lord called him out of heaven, and said urgently 'Stop, do not hurt the lad. I now know that you fear God and will obey Him, when you would sacrifice your only beloved son.' So Abraham put down the knife, looked up, and then saw a ram nearby, caught in the bushes by his horns. And the ram was used for the sacrifice in place of his son Isaac.



So Isaac was saved! But there was more than that. The angel of the Lord called again out of heaven, and said to Abraham that because he had not withheld his only beloved son, so the Lord would bless him, that he would 'multiply his seed', meaning have a large family of descendants, who would occupy many lands. Also, importantly for us, the angel added that through his family, all the nations of the earth would be blessed, because he had obeyed the Lord God. And so a great nation came into being, and eventually with the birth of God's Son Jesus Christ, brought salvation to all the nations of the world who would believe in Him.

## The Donkey By G.K. Chesterton

When fishes flew and forests walked  
And figs grew upon thorn,  
Some moment when the moon was blood  
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry  
And ears like errant wings,  
The devil's walking parody  
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,  
Of ancient crooked will;  
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,  
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;  
One far fierce hour and sweet:  
There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet.

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'Helen's Cat  
enjoying  
a spring day!





**St James the Least of All**  
**On why you should never encourage**  
**your congregation**

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren



There are times when I indulge you too much; why I ever let you run your course 'Taking Responsibility for your Church' among our congregation, I am now unable to understand. I had hopes that it might encourage a few more people to volunteer for the flower rota, or to give occasional help mowing the churchyard. I even had a vague fantasy that someone might turn detective, and discover who had been eating the chocolate biscuits between Sundays, condemning the rest of us to munch on Rich Tea after Services.

Unfortunately, your course turned out to be inspirational, and it has fired up our members to take on all sorts of new initiatives. Enthusiasm in a congregation can be a very dangerous thing, especially if people start making decisions on their own.

Those who formed a welcoming group are admittedly well-meaning – although it was more than a little traumatic for those coming through the door the next Sunday to be greeted with frenzied handshakes, big toothy smiles, and even hymnbooks. That is unheard of in this church – we always ignore people and leave them to find hymnbooks – if they can.

Naturally, all those offering to take the prayers, produce new Orders of Service and even to give the occasional sermon have been booked on the appropriate training courses. By the time they have been completed, I can only hope they will have gone off the idea.

But it was the group which decided to "beautify" the church who have proved the most tiresome. Hanging the Christmas tree lights round the altar made it look as if I was standing behind a fairground stall, waiting to invite people to throw hoops round teddy bears – although I would have rather enjoyed making winners sit for the rest of the Service holding a polythene bag containing a goldfish.

Our pulpit has also been given a makeover, with the various panels painted in contrasting colours; I am sure the sixteenth century Flemish woodcarvers would be delighted with the result, although the next time any medieval historians come to view it, I shall take the day off – probably travelling abroad.

My dear Darren, your course took the stopper out of the bottle; would you please run another to put it back?

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

*(From the Parish Pump, (by The Revd Dr Gary Bowness))*

**parkrun is coming to Aboyne**

**parkrun** is a free, fun and friendly weekly 5km community event in open spaces around the world. Walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate - at 09:30 every Saturday in Scotland. It is open to all ages and abilities and is organised locally by volunteers. Over the past 20 years, **parkrun** has become the largest health and wellbeing movement worldwide, with over 9 million registrants – see some fantastic stories from participants on line at:- <https://www.parkrun.com/about/support-us/the-difference-we-make/>

Participating in parkruns has become very popular here too - and a lot of folk in Deeside currently travel to Crathes Castle for their nearest parkrun.

At last, it is coming to Aboyne, using the Deeside Way from the Victory Hall to Tarland Road and some of the Castle Woods paths, doing two and a bit laps of the 2.3km course.

**parkrun** is for everyone – from seasoned runners to easy-going walkers, and lots of others in between. Children under 11 can join in if accompanied by an adult. You can bring a dog on a short hand-held lead. You can also volunteer to help from time to time. All you need to do is to register (for free) at [parkrun.com](http://parkrun.com) to get a barcode.

We hope to get approval from **parkrun** head office to start officially in May, when they are satisfied that we have all our procedures in place and web page set up for our weekly communications. Then, on Saturday mornings, people will start to arrive from about 9.00am and will finish by 10.30am – and then some will visit the local cafes for a blether!

During the run, participants will be asked to give way to other users of the paths and to be caring and courteous. The route will be clearly signed on the day. Also we will encourage visitors to park in the Community Centre carpark so as not to overcrowd the other parking areas in the village.

If you would like more information, would like to help, have any concerns, please email us at [parkrunaboyne@gmail.com](mailto:parkrunaboyne@gmail.com)

**Warren Burgess**

Some runners at a recent practice session, just setting out from under the old railway bridge.



## Christingle Services

Christingle is of course the symbol of Light, celebrated in both our churches in February, at Candlemas. This commemorates the presentation of the baby Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem, and marks the end of the Christmas season. The Christingles are highly symbolic, telling of Light given to the world by the birth of Jesus. They are central to this service.

Christingles have always been given, as part of the service, to members of the congregation, especially to the children. In the last few years, part of the service has been the actually making of the Christingles by the congregation. It becomes very informal, but brings everyone closer to the Christingles themselves, and their meaning.



The Christingles were prepared for the congregation by members of both churches, with the bottom cut off, rather messily, so that they can stand up, and the various components prepared.

St Kentigern's had tables at the back of the church, where the congregation went to make up the Christingles, ready to parade round the church with them.



The congregation at St Thomas's was a little less organised, but worked hard and thoroughly enjoyed the task - and the chat among them!

And the children at St Thomas's also assembled their Christingles, and then proudly displayed them to an appreciative congregation

In the end, there was a parade round the church, to celebrate the symbol of Light through the Christingles. Jesus, the Light of the world!



## A Wartime Wedding

In 1942 when I was six years old, we had an excitement in the family, our Uncle Leslie was getting married at long last to Phyllis Robertson. Now Phyllis had worked for my Auntie Mary at the shop house and had sent her with a load of shopping to Townhead with the hope Leslie would find a wife and it worked out. He was a favourite uncle with all his nieces and nephews, a kind man. It was war time and supplies were rationed and money was short, but the Simon family was determined he and his young bride would have a day to remember.

My dad borrowed the griever's car to take us to St. Thomas's for the Wedding Ceremony conducted by the Reverend Gray. We were all dolled up in our Sunday best, Mum having sewn us a new dress out of a dress and coat she had once worn. It was a lovely service and back we drove to Townhead, Logie Coldstone for the reception.

Well the barn had been cleared out, decorated and tables erected with white cloths on them with a marvellous white wedding cake at the top table. We were all seated down and treated to soup, chicken and sweet. Now my aunt and uncle that ran the shop and post office in Logie Coldstone managed to find some tinned pineapple and I had to go and spill a chunk on my new dress, silly me. However the cake was ready to be cut, but what a disappointment to us little ones, the lovely white cardboard was removed and a dark brown cake sat there instead. We did all have a piece, but no icing. It was still good though. Seemingly all the family had put their dried fruit rations together and an aunt who was a cook made the cake.

After the meal all the cousins had great fun playing outside and watching the men folk trying to do the sword dance over two cart springs, hilarious. Then one of the cousins peeped into the barn and the tables were set for tea this time. We all thought we had gone to heaven, so much food in one day, well at least I did.



It was certainly a day to remember and luckily for me the pineapple stain came out of my dress. I also heard later on that the bride had to milk the cow on her wedding day!

Here is a photo taken at Townhead of the happy couple. Photographers were too expensive as well as wedding dresses needed coupons and money. Phyllis wore a lovely blue suit which she got better use of in wartime.

**Eileen A. Davies**



## Anna Chaplaincy

On the 23rd February I was commissioned as an Anna Chaplain in my home church, Stockethill Church in Aberdeen. Sheila was most interested in this and asked me to write something about what an Anna Chaplain is. An Anna Chaplain is essentially a chaplain to the elderly. Their Handbook says:

“Anna Chaplaincy seeks to accompany older people at this stage of their lives. It is an ecumenical, community based, chaplaincy approach to promoting the spiritual welfare of old people. Anna Chaplaincy is a person-centred, non-judgemental ministry for people of strong, little or no faith at all.

It is a ministry that connects with older people wherever they are living, whether in residential or nursing homes, sheltered housing, retirement complexes or private homes.

Anna Chaplains are appointed and authorised by and sent out under the authority of their churches. There are around 450 Anna Chaplains across the UK although only 3 or 4 based in Scotland.

Anna Chaplain, as a title, was chosen for it echoes the widow and faithful older person who, with Simeon, recognised the baby Jesus as the Messiah and the fulfilment of God's promises. (Luke 2).

I first came across Anna Chaplaincy when I was at university when a fellow student became one. As I investigated it more, I had a sense of “this is for me”. Over the years I have never forgotten that sense, a number of friends said that I would be good at it and encouraged me to pursue it. I have been a Pastoral Volunteer for my church for 2 years and about 8 months ago they agreed to me becoming an Anna Chaplain. I completed training and was accepted as an Anna chaplain, and this led to my commissioning last month.

Most of my work is in Sheltered Accommodation, across the Parish. We run 2 services a month in different accommodations, I visit people in their own flats and plan to extend my ministry to include supporting the carers and families. I run a “Drop In”, where people are able to come for a cuppa and a chat in two of the accommodations and attend an afternoon tea in another one. I also visit people in their own homes in the community, as well as people who have gone into care. I love my work, being able to make a difference to people's lives, and supporting them as they negotiate the changes that old age brings.

The photograph shows my minister and his wife, Ian and Sarah Aitkin and my mentor Vanda Noble.

Thank you all for your kind wishes and support, and please be assured of my love and prayers in the months to come.

**Helen Dray**



## Congratulations and Commiserations

Congratulations to Helen Dray on being commissioned as an Anna Chaplain for her home church.

## Memorial Service

We mourn with the family of Mary Fennell following her recent death.

A memorial service will be held for her in St Kentigern's on the 28th May.

## Mary Fennell



Mary was the widow of Rev Tony Fennell, who had served as an assistant priest in our churches at the time of Patrick's ministry, before he had a serious stroke. Mary remained in Ballater, looking after Tony for many years until his death, and worshipping and serving at St Kentigern's, including work with children, and as stand-in organist when needed.

She was also invaluable in keeping the standards of the Deeside Tattler high.

She had for many years worked with young children as a head-teacher, and among other things, had high standards in English grammar.

So she faithfully proof-read through every article before the Tattler was published. As Editor, it was not only useful in correcting various mistakes, both typos and grammatical, but also a pleasure to spend time with Mary, and share news and thoughts with such a fine person.

Vittoria writes:

When I moved up to Ballater, I stayed with Mary for the first week while I sorted out the Rectory. For my first meal in her house she had prepared a wonderful three course dinner, complete with a cheeseboard made up of cheeses from around the diocese! Always hospitable and always welcoming, she was a great support to me in my ministry, upholding me in prayer. From running the children's work to playing the organ, to reading and leading intercessions, she was actively involved in the worship and ministry of St Kentigern's.

And she also made the most wonderful tiramisu.

**Congratulations** to Jean and Peter Sowrey, who celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary in March.

*(Pictured with daughter Jill and grandson Sam)*



## 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](mailto:stthomasaboyne@gmail.com)

St Kentigern's Web-site is: [stkentigernsballater.aodiocese.org.uk](http://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**

## 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 May 13th

## CONTACTS :

Treasurer  
Secretary  
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

## 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

Anne Harper  
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  
Andrew Wilson, Sue Burgess

Jill Binns  
Warren Burgess  
Michael Bruce

## ST. NINIAN'S

Dr Hugh Dawson: Lay Reader, Treasurer, Organist  
Astrid Cheyne: Flowers  
Anne Richardson: Child Protection Officer

**Lay Eucharistic Ministers:** Susan Smith, Sue Burgess