

The Deeside Tattler

April and May 2026



St. Kentigern's, Ballater, St. Thomas's, Aboyne



Rector: Vacant

The Rectory, 7 Invercauld Road, Ballater, AB35 5RP

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Dates for the Diary

2nd April Maundy Thursday 6.00pm Holy Communion and stripping of the Altar, at St Thomas's

3rd April Good Friday 2.00 - 3.00pm St Thomas's Meditation for Good Friday

4th April Easter Vigil and Bonfire, at Aboyne-Dinnet Church

5th April Easter Sunday Easter Communion in both churches, led by Ken Webb followed by Easter Egg hunt in the grounds

Tuesday, 14th April 11.30am Mid-week Communion at St Thomas's, soup lunch. 2.30pm Service at Praesmohr

19th April, 6pm Music and words for the Easter Season, including Faure's Requiem

14th May Ascension Day 6.0pm Holy Communion at St Thomas's

From the Editor:

It is almost a year since our much-loved Rector Vittoria Hancock took her last services for us, on the last Sunday in April. It says much for her careful preparation for us that we have so far been able to continue with much of the life of our churches during a lengthy interregnum. In particular, Vittoria arranged for clergy to take our Sunday services for the three months after she left, and this has enabled us to continue along the same lines. We still have a non-communion family service on the first of the month, led by members of our congregations, and Communion services on the other Sundays. We are very grateful to those clergy who have taken the trouble to lead our services so consistently. We are particularly grateful to Ken Webb and John Walker, who are continuing to take a regular slot each month, thus ensuring some continuity in our worship. Andrew Wilson and Isaac Poobalan also remain available to us, which is much appreciated.

Other activities have continued, including some mid-week communions, celebration of the Christingle, Harvest and other special occasions; also performances by the St Thomas's Augmented Choir, and Anne Harper's work with the After-School Club.

We would expect to continue all this as long as the Interregnum lasts. We miss having a Rector to take charge of things, but the work of members of the Vestries and others, especially Sue Burgess and Sabine Muir, has made it possible to continue meantime. Our thanks to all who have worked so hard to enable this.

We will continue to report the various actives in this magazine, along with all the other interesting articles that have been contributed. May it all continue until such time as we get our new Rector, and a new opening for our churches. **Ed**

Sheila Maxwell Tel 013398 86740 EDITOR and Aboyne contact

Email: sheilamaxwell@btinternet.com

Sabine Muir Contact, St Kentigern's. Email VestrysecretaryStK@outlook.com

Joint service, St Kentigern's and St Thomas's

On Mothering Sunday 15th March, St Kentigern's held a joint service with the congregation from St Thomas's Church. We have continued our regular joint services, about six-monthly, to give the members of our two churches the chance to meet each other, in worship and socially. This is especially important at a time when we must jointly work to appoint a new Rector to our churches.

The service was led by Rev Ken Webb, who adapted his sermon to suit the occasion. He gave a lovely, relevant talk, after which all the ladies were given a posy of spring flowers to take home. These were beautifully assembled by Susan and Sabine.

The service was at a later time of 11am to allow us all to have our joint bring-and-share lunch around 12-ish in the St Kentigern's Church Hall.

The serving table was laden with a selection of delicious food.

The desserts were really lovely, especially Susan's trademark carrot cake and Maggie's rhubarb and ginger cheesecake, not to mention Sue's chocolate cake.



It was a lovely occasion, to share food and chat with members of our sister churches.



And it was good to have Ken Webb sharing with us.

We will look forward to having another similar occasion in due course.

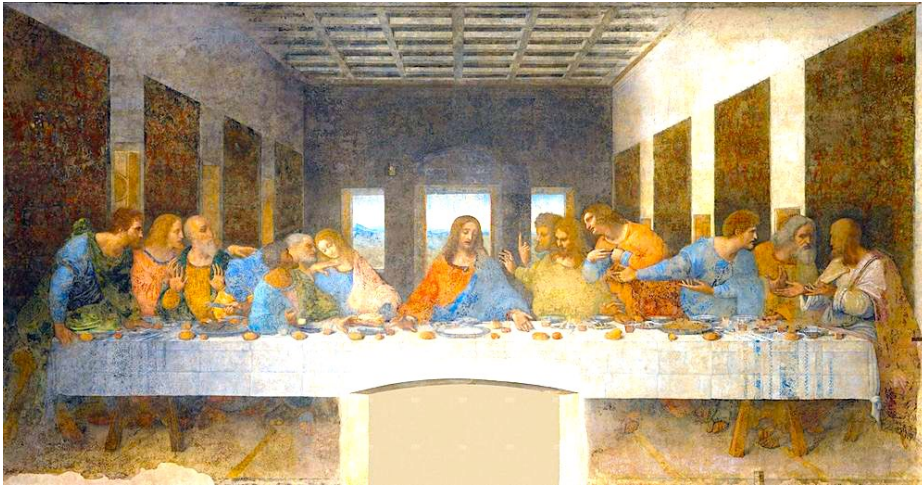


Letter from Andrew Wilson

Dear friends in St Kentigern's and St Thomas's,

I am interested in art as an admirer and as a very novice painter with the handicap of being colour blind. Wendy Mary Beckett, was born on 25 February 1930 and died on the 26 December 2018. Though she began her life as a teaching nun, following her First Class Honours degree from Oxford, she had to give up the classroom after having epileptic seizures brought on by stress. She then became a contemplative nun living a life of prayer in a small caravan in the grounds of a Carmelite Monastery in Norfolk. From there she became a legendary expert and commentator on art, the author of the internationally best-selling book *The Story of Painting* and a frequent presenter of programmes on art for the BBC. Her *Bible Treasury – Stories and wisdom through the eyes of great painters* was published in the United Kingdom nearly 25 years ago, but it is a book I return to many times for inspiration and devotion. The book takes you on a journey into the heart of the Bible and biblical art.

Among the masterpieces of art included in the book is one of the best known of all – *The Last Supper*, by Leonardo da Vinci (1452- 1519)



This particular painting came to my mind because Milan has been so much in the news with the 2026 Winter Olympic Games and I imagine the Refectory of Santa Maria dell Grazie, Milan will have had many additional visitors due to the Games, queuing to see one of the Western world's most recognizable paintings and one of Leonardo da Vinci's most celebrated works.

Here is Sister Wendy's appraisal of Da Vinci's, The Last Supper:

It always seems to me that it is sadly appropriate that the greatest of all Last

Supper paintings, Leonardo's fresco in the monks' refectory in Milan, should have begun to fade almost as soon as it was painted. Insatiable of experimentation, Leonardo ignored the established rules of fresco painting and tried an innovative technique. It didn't work, and restoration has been incessant ever since.'

Sister Wendy, however, thought the fading of the paint was appropriate, though tragic, because what Jesus did at the Last Supper exceeded our human understanding and has lasted in enduring significance in the life of the Church and the Christian worshipper. In his huge fresco Leonardo Da Vinci shows a lonely Jesus, despite the company of the twelve disciple who were there with him around the table. They were trying to unravel the unthinkable, what he had said about one of them being his betrayer. Jesus, seated among them yet alone, was thinking of the cost of giving himself for all of them, giving himself for all of humanity, in the ultimate sacrifice of himself.

At the Last Supper Leonardo da Vinci in his huge fresco in Milan shows Jesus doing something that is beyond our human understanding. He is giving his followers in all time, the mystical means of communion with him. But the Last Supper had to become the Lord's Supper for this to happen and what transformed the Last Supper into the Lord's Supper was the Death and Resurrection of Jesus

The betrayal, denial, desertion and destruction of Jesus on the Cross are all beyond belief given what we know about him now, yet his final gift, the Last Supper, unlike the constantly fading Milan fresco of the scene, has an overpowering significance because the Death and Resurrection of Jesus gave the Church the Lord's Supper that we may share communion with his risen body for ever and live his risen life, for ever.

May the mysterious and glorious blessings of Easter continue to transform us all through the gifts the Lord Jesus has given us to remember him and live in him?

Andrew Wilson

Having written these words I wish to say that I now believe it is wise for me no longer to preside at formal Communion Services which I have been privileged to do, and especially among you in the times of our Vacancy. A couple of years ago I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. I now have a noticeable hand tremor and issues with balance. These things make celebrating Holy Communion as a Minister logistically difficult and can be distracting for the congregation. I have decided to step back from this role with real reluctance. I will as long as able continue to serve the Church in other ways.

We go forward together in the Service of Christ,

Andrew Wilson

We are all grateful for your service, Andrew. We particularly hope it will include more of your very thoughtful articles, from time to time. **Ed**

Anthony's Hopewell

It was the year 1970 and good fortune had arrived in the guise of an inheritance from my darling and amusing mother. I invested my new found wealth and considerably more borrowed money, and over the next three years, I purchased 320 acres, adjoining my father's original 180 acres Home Farm. The first acquisition of 58 acres, virgin, undeveloped and unspoilt crofting small holding land, bought for the princely sum of £69 per acre - £3500.



In addition, the four farms I bought at that time amounted to £41,500, which, with my impetuous knack of seizing a good opportunity, has rocketed in value and grown enormously. This all happened at the same time when I was a bachelor, not yet 30 years old.

Aged 26, I remember well: the farm underwent an amalgamation scheme when the outgoing small holding farm received a small golden handshake from The Government.

At that juncture, the then amalgamated Hopewell Farms embarked upon substantial building, re-building and re-modelling work. The Farms received Capital Grants, and

we were able to construct new cattle buildings, cubicle housing, silage pits and driers etc. Roads were constructed, fields enlarged with the prompt removal of vast amounts of dykes. A huge adventure was initiated, including water features (several lochs, ponds etc) and beautifully managed woods. It was hard work but enormously rewarding. Cottages were constructed, connected and then sold to finance the whole operation.



Latterly, 4 miles (6100 metres in total) of wildlife hedgerows were established, and we placed a great emphasis upon wildlife, environmental conservation and beauty, my absolute passion. Beautiful woods, interesting trees including Rowan, birch, Japanese maple and over one thousand mostly hybrid rhododendrons, and those species gradually established over the years.



Of course, my lovely, manicured House Garden is full of roses, colour, more maples, azaleas and many herbaceous varieties. The let cottages, originally 'holiday' cottages, were then re-appointed with further investments from my profit margins. The properties are now let and rented out long term, and here at Hopewell, we enjoy a vital, vibrant little community, with happy, friendly tenant families who appreciate the wildlife and the special beauty of the Estate.

I am now elderly but still a very active codger of eighty-two with a significantly active mind and marked and essential sense of humour. Moreover, I am still seeking new adventures and perhaps an exciting and demanding project, but this must, perhaps be left to the next generation. For what lies ahead for them? - a Catering Establishment, a landscaping business or even a 'School for Scoundrels or deprived but capable and amusing souls: perhaps, too, a Sports Centre, a Golf or tennis club for budding athletes! The future is to be their's, and it has to be great fun, just as I have always enjoyed the challenges and the fun!

Anthony De Winton



The Power of Three

The Holy Trinity is not primarily a doctrine to debate, but an experience in which we are invited to participate. To be able to see the truth of the Trinity and participate in the movement of their sacred dance we need the mindset of a mystic, an artist, a prophet, a visionary theologian. The Cappadocian Fathers, who had a deep experiential knowledge of God, were the visionary theologians who, in the fourth century, first attempted to put into words what they had intuited from experience was the truth.

Part of the problem is that what we understand today by the word person, quite different from what the Cappadocian Fathers meant. The Greek term they used referred to the mask that actors wore to indicate different roles rather than an individual person. What they were trying to express is that somehow, though God is one, he/she is not solitary. Within the one God there are mutual relationships, different faces, as it were, that reflect one another.

Dancers around a maypole

What if the Holy Trinity does not consist of three fixed identities but personifications of energy streams that flow and intertwine, like dancers around a maypole, and of the different states in which these have manifested over time.

These flowing and intertwining energy streams within the Trinity each, at different stages, fulfil one of three independent and equal functions or forces of the Law of Three that I wrote about in the last issue of the Tattler: the active Holy Affirming, the passive or Holy Denying force, which is not to be viewed as a negative force, and the Holy Reconciling force. All three are necessary, and when intertwining and working together by each emptying itself into the other, something new arises in the evolving story of the Trinity.

From Alpha to Omega

Starting at an 'Alpha' point, before space and time, within Endless Unity there is the stirring of a desire to manifest as visible light and matter. It is a desire that is born of Love, the essence of Eternal Unity. However, that creates an agitation in the tranquility and equilibrium of Eternity because there is a risk that the tranquility will be disturbed, since differentiation means difference. Thus, Endless Unity becomes the Holy Denying force.

The reconciling force is like a fire sparked by the friction of holy desiring and holy denying energies. It is the fire of love and the light of pure awareness. These are the beginnings of the archetypal feminine and masculine energies, and the source of self reflective consciousness.

What arises out of their initial dance is Light/Word (Logos) and Reflective Wisdom/Love (Sophia), the masculine and feminine aspects of Endless Unity, are joined, though in later stages they will be separated.

The process ends in what Teilhard de Chardin called the 'Omega Point', when all things converge again when everything in both the spiritual and physical dimensions are brought into a unity in Christ; only now retaining all the differentiations of function that have emerged in the process.

A Trinity embroidered into the tapestry of life

The Holy Denying member of the Trinity, Endless Unity hidden in light inaccessible, as the hymn puts it, remains static. Think of Endless Unity as the maypole around which the energies of the Holy Affirming, the Holy Reconciling and the New Arising dance exchanging places in each phase of the sacred dance.

Or, to change the metaphor, starting from the three energies three different threads are being sewn back and forth through a cloth that God is embroidering to create the pattern that has been in God's mind since the beginning. However, we only see the underside of the cloth, so cannot make sense of the pattern except by some kind of eye-opening experience.

At each new arising the thread is brought back from the underside of the cloth to emerge as a counterstroke. Thus, each new arising has a lineage that goes back to previous stages of the development process and influences the form that the new arising takes, just as the DNA of the parent influences the form of the next generation.

Descent and Ascent: an Evolving Trinity

This process moves forward in seven stages, a bit like the seven stages in the first story of Creation which describes another fundamental cosmic Law, the Law of Seven, that governs how anything evolves and grows, which I will write about in the next issue of the Tattler.

In between there are five other stages, the Primordial, Creational, Incarnational, Messianic and Pentecostal Trinities, during which Endless Unity, as it manifests in the dimension of consciousness is seen, increasingly, as Love. And Linking each stage is the thread of 'counter-strokes'.

The whole process is divided into two symmetrical phases, the phase of descent and the phase of ascent. This parallels what has happened to light energy in our space-time universe, where the descent is into increasingly restricted forms, from light to sub-atomic particles, to atoms and then molecules. And the ascent is into increasing freedom and consciousness, from molecules to plants to animals to human beings.

The descent phase of the Trinity is also into increasingly compressed forms, starting with the eternal Word and culminating in the birth of Jesus Christ. And the ascent phase into increasing breadth, from the individual Jesus, to the Body of Christ (Christ manifest in the many) to all things being united in Christ.

An embodied trinity

The fulcrum, nadir and turning point of this process is the Incarnational Trinity, when the 'Word' that emerged as the new arising of the Primordial Trinity, and that gives birth, in turn to the creation of matter, eventually becomes flesh, becomes a human being.

From that point forward the process moves increasingly towards the transcendent dimension from which it originated in stages that mirror that of the phase of descent. But, the forms in which the Trinity is expressed in the ascending phase retain the imprint of the historical Jesus who died and rose again.

The Incarnational Trinity is the form the Trinity took during the time leading up to the birth of Jesus. That was when the active force of the Eternal Word that was God, danced with the consenting human Mary around the Maypole of the Eternal Father. And the New Arising was Jesus, the Word made flesh.

The Messianic Trinity is the form the Trinity took during the life and ministry of Jesus. In that phase he embodied the reconciling force of the Trinity as the Beloved Son. Mary Magdalene, his Beloved Companion, embodied the active force, for the ancient root of the Hebrew word 'woman' means the power of creative initiative.

And what arises out of the creative dance of the Mary and Jesus around the Maypole of the Endless Unity after Jesus' death and resurrection is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all humanity at Pentecost. But now, the Breath of God's Word that was the active force in the Incarnational Trinity has, through the incarnation and Messianic phase, become forever changed to become the Spirit of Christ incarnate.

Our participation in the holy trinity

And after Pentecost the Son is no longer the individual Jesus, but is the corporate Body of Christ; that's you and me. And we take on the Active role in the ongoing drama of the unfolding Trinity. We are called to demonstrate in word and action the self emptying love that Jesus modelled in his teaching and life. So, you and I are participating in that same self-emptying dance of the evolving Trinity.

What emerges as a result of the intertwining of the affirming Body of Christ (Son) and the reconciling Holy Spirit, in the dance around the Maypole of the Endless Unity is what Jesus called the Kingdom or Realm of Heaven. And that refers to all that manifests in this world as a result of human beings collectively acting consciously in the Power of the three energy streams of this evolving Trinity that I have been talking about.

And when, as a result, the whole of this world has been touched and transformed by that power, the story of the evolving Trinity reaches its conclusion and fulfilment. And to lead us together until that time may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

(If you want to explore these ideas at greater depth, then please read Cynthia Bougeault's book, 'The Holy Trinity and the Law of Three')

Ken Webb

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News from Aboyne-Dinnet

The Community Life Group of Aboyne-Dinnet Church is having their first Breakfast & Talk session of the year on **Saturday, 4th April**.

The next one will be on **Saturday 2nd May**. As usual the breakfast is held in the church hall on Huntly Road and starts at 10 o'clock. The May speaker will be someone from the **Seed Box**, which promises to be a great talk for that time of the year. Anyone interested to come along has to book their place in advance. Tickets are £5 and can be secured by sending an email to christa.markham@btinternet.com or by sending a SMS message to 07899424828.

Stewardship of volunteers

No church can operate without the willing help of volunteers and during our interregnum this is more important than ever. In previous Tattlers, I have concentrated on financial stewardship and in addition to this, the Vestry has the responsibility of caring for the wellness of any volunteers. This means ensuring that old members don't burn out and new volunteers feel a sense of inclusion by being invited in.

Whether the work of a volunteer is polishing the brass, changing light bulbs, watching over younger members - whether during a service or work done in the background, it is being done to further the mission of God's work in the world. All volunteers doing work within the context of the congregation should be viewed as doing ministry.

It is often easy to fall into the trap of asking the same individuals to do the same or more work over and over again. This is problematic for several reasons:

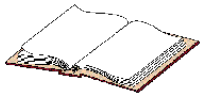
- Individuals burn out when asked to do too many tasks for too long.
- Individuals go through cycles in their membership, sometimes active and "doing" and sometimes needing to be reflective and just present.
- Individuals who have been the "go to" may not have the gift and skills required to do the work that needs to be done.
- New individuals need to be invited into the "circle" - new blood is needed.

Every person has the ability to give something to the work and mission of the church – and every gift should be acknowledged and valued. More on that next time.

Sue Burgess

"...and once you've done the flower arrangements, polished the pews, scrubbed the floor, shined the silver and taken a look at the problem with the boiler we wondered, well, you have to laugh, but all six bell-ringers are on holiday at the same time and..."





Readings for April and May 2026

5th April EASTER SUNDAY	Acts 10.34-43 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20: 1-18	Marcus Humphrey	Christopher and Margaret Heald
12th April Easter 2	Acts 2: 14a, 22-32 1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20: 19-31	Sabine Muir	Irene Legge
19th April Easter 3	Acts 2 :14a, 36-41 1Peter 1: 17-23 Luke 24: 13-25	Stanley Ewen	The Aboyne family
26th April Easter 4	Acts 2:42-47 1 Peter 2: 19-25 John 10:1-10	Hilary Mutch	Jill Binns
3rd May Easter 5	Acts 7: 55-60 1 Peter 2: 2-10 John 14: 1-14	Anne Maggs	The Rider Family
10th May Easter 6	Acts 17: 22-31 1 Peter 3: 13-22 John 14: 15-21	Sabrina Humphrey	Anne Harper
17th May Ascension 1	Acts 1: 1-11 Ephesians 1: 15-23 Luke 24: 44-53	Maggie Jaffray Ewen	Meg White
24th May PENTECOST	Acts 2: 1-21 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 John 20: 19-23	Susan Smith	Irene Legge
31st May TRINITY SUNDAY	Isaiah 40: 12-17, 27-31 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 Matthew 28: 16-20	Marcus Humphrey	Carol Birss

Ascension Day -

Thursday 14th May, 6pm Holy Communion at St Thomas's

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.



Spread the story:

Spread the story,
whisper to the Earth,
Touch the moments
blessings of rebirth.
Taste the wonders,
the fragrances, the fears.
See Love's unfolding echo
through the years.

*Miriam Martin P. B.V.M.
from Judy Cannato, Field of Compassion*

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. During the Interregnum, they will be led by members of the congregations of St Kentigern's and St Thomas's alternately.

The next services are:

5th April is Easter Sunday. There will be a celebration of Holy Communion to mark this important date in the Church's calendar

12th April 'Believing without Seeing'

3rd May "Building Dens with God".

From the Bible for the young and not so young

The journey to Jerusalem



Easter Day is the most important celebration for Christians, but a week before that we celebrate Palm Sunday, when Jesus came into Jerusalem for the last time. He knew there was danger for him there, he had had many disagreements with the Chief Priests and scribes, and his life had been in danger more than once. But it was the time of the Feast of the Passover, and he was determined to go.

Jesus was at the height of his ministry at this time. The ordinary people came to hear his teaching, and especially they were amazed at his healing miracles. Many were seeking healing for themselves. Matthew tells of the two blind men, shouting out 'Have mercy on us Son of David', over and over. The crowd tried to shut them up, but Jesus went up to them, asking what they wanted. And they said they wanted their eyes to be opened. Jesus took pity on them, touched their eyes, and their sight returned! And so, importantly, we are told that they followed Jesus after that. No wonder so many people crowded round Jesus!

Then when they got near Jerusalem, we get the extraordinary story of Jesus's entrance to Jerusalem. He told two of his disciples, who were always with him, to go into the nearby village, where they would find an ass tied up. They were to bring it to him, saying, if anyone queried this, that 'The Lord has need of it'. A prophet had said many years before 'to the daughter of Zion, your King is coming to you, humble and riding on an ass.' Matthew liked to tell of the prophecies being fulfilled

Perhaps the people expected something rather grander for the coming of what they assumed was their King, with all the grandeur one would expect. But even so, they still believed in him, put clothing on the ass for him to ride on, and cut palm branches to lay on the ground before him - hence the name 'Palm Sunday'. And they were waving the palms, and crying out 'blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!'

When Jesus eventually got to Jerusalem, he went to the temple, and was horrified to see all the money-changers and sellers of pigeons and so on to those visiting for the Passover. He was so angry, he turned on them and drove them out of the temple. He quoted from the scriptures, this was to be a house of prayer - and they were making it a den of thieves. But his ministry went on, those who needed to be healed, the blind and the lame, carried on surrounding him, pleading to be healed, and calling out 'Hosanna to the son of David' It must have been an amazing, wonderful scene.

But it did not go down well with the Chief Priests and the Scribes, feeling that their authority was being threatened. They angrily asked Jesus if he heard what people were saying - and he replied, quoting, yes - 'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, you have brought perfect praise'

Such was the euphoria around the scene, that the people did not seem to notice the contrast between the sort of King who would use his power to deliver the nation, ruling in splendid majesty, and the humble servant who arrived sitting on an ass. It was only later, when they realised he was not that sort of person at all, that they turned against him. And so there followed the dreadful scenes of the trial of Jesus, and the crucifixion. Only then do we have the glorious resurrection, and new life for all who believe in him.

WAITING FOR SPRING

I wait for the spring to come
When frozen hearts will be warmed
And rigid attitudes will bend

I wait for the spring to come
When hidden talent will flower
And bare-boned lives will blossom

I wait for the spring to come
When darkened minds will see the light
And dull eyes will be filled with brightness

I wait for the spring to come
When we awake from the sleep of death
And arise to the joy of life immortal

SUDDENLY

Suddenly the sun came out
From grey and heavy clouds
In a moment the light
swept over the houses and church
All were transformed



Suddenly the Son broke out
From the darkness of the tomb
In a moment his light swept
Over a disturbed world

*Two poems from A Celebration of Spring by David Adam,
one time Vicar of the Holy Island of Lindisfarne,
Published by SPCK 2005*

Great Houses and Gardens of North Yorkshire Sept.'25 Part 2

Next morning we had an hour's drive to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Fountains Abbey which was most impressive, I had no idea just how much of the Abbey was left standing. This is probably due in part to it being in a hollow, so that anyone wanting to take the stone for building would struggle to get it up the hill in a horse-drawn cart on soft ground! Fountains Mill is the oldest standing building in the English National Trust, and we watched the large water wheel still working away



We were then taken on to Sion Hill House, a Grade II* Arts and Crafts period house, of outstanding neo-Georgian architectural detail, which was designed in 1912 by the renowned architect Walter H. Brierly of York, known as the "Lutyens of the North".

We were welcomed by the owner Michael Mallaby who gave us a personal guided tour of the house,

followed by a guided tour of the gardens. Mr. Mallaby is an avid collector of antiques of all sorts, particularly pictures and china, and it was amazing to see so much fine art and antiquities packed into a relatively small house. The extensive gardens of five acres have been lovingly restored by Mr. Mallaby to include a formal parterre with clipped hornbeam and yew, a Long Walk with bountiful herbaceous and shrub borders, charming woodland style Lower Walk overlooking the River Wiske, a traditional kitchen garden, and a Centenary Rose Garden.

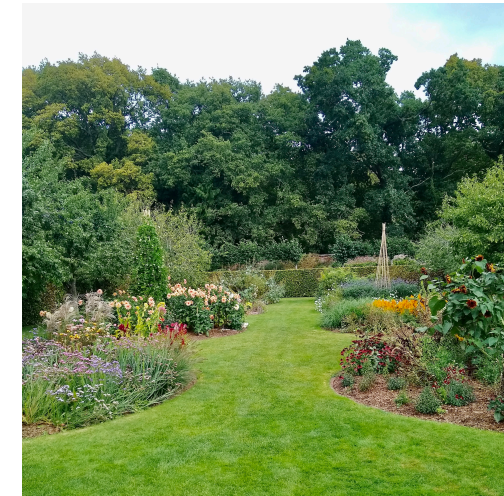


After an excellent lunch in the house, we were taken to Richmond to the Georgian Theatre Royal, which is the oldest working theatre in Britain having been built by the actor Samuel Butler in 1788. A small theatre museum contains a unique collection of playbills and handbills from 1792 to the 1840s, which illustrate the changing themes of entertainment at the time. The theatre also owns Britain's oldest set of scenery, "The Woodland Scene", painted between 1818 and 1836, which is also on display to the public.

The artistes from the London Festival Opera used the theatre to give us another excellent hour's entertainment, before it was time to return to our hotel. It was a long and quite tiring day, but the variety and interest of everything we saw certainly made up for it.



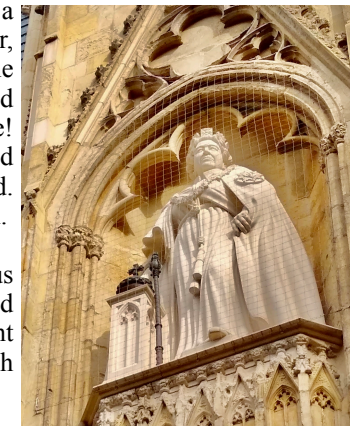
On Thursday we were taken to Scramston Hall and Gardens to visit the lovingly restored fine Regency house still lived in by the Legard family.



The first house was built around 1700 and modelled to a design by Thomas Leverton in 1795-1800. I thought I might see Charles Legard who was at school with me, but sadly he died a year ago. He and his wife had undertaken huge renovation work to the Walled Garden which had lain derelict for 50 years. It had been designed by the renowned Dutch plants man, Piet Oudolf, and features a modern perennial meadow planting alongside more traditional areas set within the 18th century walls of the original kitchen garden. The parkland and hall gardens, designed under Capability Brown, include 10 acres of lakes and a Palladian bridge

After a light lunch at Scramston, we were taken back to the hotel, and those of us who wanted, were then taken into York City for a couple of hours. I did go into York, to the Minster, while Sabrina had a rest, and had a marvellous time seeing it all again, especially when the Organist started rehearsing for the next Service, that just made it for me! I was also fascinated by the Roman remains found under the undercroft and which are very well displayed. The Minster is a wonderful place to spend an afternoon.

Our tour was rounded off by another delicious dinner after we had once more been entertained superbly by the LFO singers. Next morning we caught the LNER East Coast Express to Stonehaven which arrived on time without having to go via Carlisle!



It was a thoroughly enjoyable short tour which we would highly recommend if Noble Caledonia repeat it.

Marcus Humphrey
October 2025

*HM Queen Elizabeth II
on façade of York Minster*

Wow, My 90th Birthday!

I had decided to have a quiet Birthday and celebrate later on once the weather improved with an Alzheimer's Tea Party at home to celebrate my birthday with my Barrie's one due in April, but my family and kind friends had other ideas.

Well it all began on Sunday, 1st February when I managed to drive through all the rain flooded roads to church for the Christingle service, which was very nice then afterwards while we shared a cup of coffee, the Rev. Andrew Wilson announced that my 90th was coming up on Thursday so a Happy Birthday was sung for me, so nice of my church family.



The snow decided to come back and on Tuesday, the Crochet class at Glenbuchat and on Wednesday the Silver Circle at Lonach were both cancelled. However on Wednesday morning the roads had improved and Nancy and Christine popped in from the Silver Circle with a lovely card

and a 1936 Sixpence made into a beautiful brooch, a wee while later, Sheena from the crochet class came with a beautiful homemade card and marmalade.

Thursday morning, up and ready in my newly crocheted jersey (took me a year to make under the expert guidance of Babs) I had even more friends from crochet class, Nicole, Karen and Donna arrived with a birthday sash, flowers, chocolates, cards, and case for my hooks. The kettle had to go on for coffee then, and in came Nicky with yet more goodies and cards from herself and staff at the Central Garage.

The postie came next with more cards and also flowers by post. After lunch I set off for Alford where Pam picked me up and our great granddaughter, Ivy, aged four on the way to see Barrie in Bennachie View Care Home, Inverurie. We shared a flycup and I think he knew I was there. On the way home we popped in to see Gill who looks after Miley, nearly two our other great granddaughter, arriving home with more flowers and cards. Finding another card and gift tied to the door handle from Nicola, crochet class.



On Friday two of my nieces, Susan and Joanne, turned up with more flowers and a lovely scarf then on Saturday Pam came up for me and took me down to Gill's house where the rest of my immediate family had gathered and I was sung to and given a beautiful cake, more flowers, and then taken to see a super video Lauren, our granddaughter, had made with messages from heaps of friends and family in what we call Nom's Shed. Another marvellous day with all my cards and flowers making my sun porch looking like a florist.

On Sunday Lesley, niece came for lunch with chocs and a Lego flower to make. Diana popped over on Monday with hyacinths in bloom then, told me I had so many folk visiting, she had a job to fit in a call.

On Tuesday at crochet class I was given another beautifully made and decorated cake by Karen and it was shared with everyone after another happy birthday sung for me.



Wednesday at Silver Circle I was given another lovely cake and sung to again so it was shared with all my friends there.

Thursday at Strathdon heARTS, we were painting yellow articles being my favourite colour and I was given a lovely cake made by Cath and sung to by the class in fancy dress instigated by Isobel, also flowers, Robin jug and soaps.

So all in all my 90th birthday lasted for a week and more and such a memorable time was had by all and I won't forget all my Facebook friends adding their best wishes and comments.



I am ever so lucky and very grateful to have such a lovely family and so many kind friends. I cannot thank them enough so I'll just thank God and ask for His blessing for them all.

Eileen A. Davies

PS I still intend to have my Alzheimer's party when we can find a suitable date.



On the perils of swinging incense

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Well, at least you tried. Filling in for another colleague who was away on holiday was kind of you; that it was somewhere with a high church tradition was adventurous of you. But just because something is worth doing, must you do it to *such* excess?

I can remember the first time I saw you having to use incense; you held the thurible as though you had just been presented with a dead rat. This time, however, I am told that you heated so much charcoal that the congregation thought you were going to hold a barbecue rather than burn incense.

The church warden was impressed with how quickly everyone knelt down, as you went by. If it was in more of an effort to stay clear of your thurible than to pray, well never mind, at least they were on their knees. And I am entirely on your side; you were not to know that their new fire protection system included automatic sprinklers, activated when too much smoke is detected. I am sure most of them would have dried out by Evensong.

You told me that you had not been sure what to do with the thurible when you reached the front. But swinging it so enthusiastically that the chain broke and catapulted several pounds weight of red-hot brass through one of their stained glass windows was really not the best solution. Never mind. I am sure the insurance company will be sympathetic.

But surely you knew that smells also implies bells? So why the panic when the server rang the bells in your ear beside the altar? To have promptly dropped the chalice and shouted, 'fire!' was surely something of an over-reaction? Especially as it meant that the vergers re-started the sprinkler system. I am told that several in the congregation left church looking as if they had taken part in a mass baptism, involving full immersion whilst fully clothed.

I am told that you actually even wore full robes, rather than your customary T-shirt and jeans. Just one tip: should you ever wear them again, you might wish to wear the chasuble right side out. But that is a small point compared to the 'hat', as you called it. My dear nephew, wherever did you get it from? That is only worn by a bishop – and even then, the two tabs hang at the back, not over your face.

I am told that some of the congregation feared that in some frightful 'fresh expression' of episcopal rule, you had suddenly been handed control of the diocese. With the Church of England in its present woeful state, I suppose anything is possible.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

From the *Parish Pump*. Editor: The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'... If you would like a copy of our published booklet of Uncle Eustace's letters, please email us at: enquiries@parishpump.co.uk



Personnel

Celebrations

John Lovie had his 90th Birthday in March, which was celebrated in St Kentigern's with a cake from his family, and a card was signed by everyone.

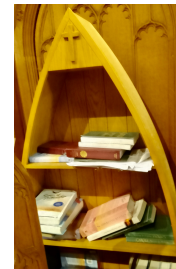
Deaths

Margaret Charles, former secretary to the Vestry, died in January
Ed Horton died in March.

Ed and Jean Horton have been active members of St Thomas's over the years, in all sorts of ways. Ed had an active life, both working and in voluntary work, being a popular member of Probus.

Jean has had mobility problems latterly, but they both shared in regular 'greeting', Jean sitting near the door with a cheerful word to everyone and Ed giving a warm welcome as he handed out the books. Ed left St Thomas's a few lasting wooden gifts which he made himself with his lathe.

A wooden dish is used for the water for our Baptisms, and two lovely candleholders grace the side altar.



By a special request from the choir, Ed crafted a little cross to go on the bookcase holding some of the choir-books.

And he made a really beautiful table, used for flowers, especially by the pulpit, where we could all see it.



Our thoughts go to Jean and the family in their sudden loss of Ed.

Christingle

Both churches celebrated the Christingle in style again, led by Sue, with the congregations making up their own Christingles - a fun thing but with a depth of meaning. It was combined with the celebration of Candlemas, and the chalking of the door, all great traditions.

Many thanks to Ballater Deli for the gift of oranges.



WEB-SITES

St Thomas's Web-site has been transferred and upgraded. The link is <http://www.stthomasaboynne.org>

If you want to get in touch, please email: stthomasaboynne@gmail.com or phone Tel No 07352 750090

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

The Deeside Tattler is posted on the St Thomas's web-site, along with some of the previous editions. It has been possible to return the photos to their original colours, making a huge difference to their quality.

Some services are recorded at St Thomas's, and posted on Youtube, usually a few hours after the event
The Youtube Link is:
<https://www.youtube.com/@st.thomaschurchaboynne>

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”

Colossians Ch 4 v2

Anyone who would like to be prayed for especially, or has a friend who would like this, please get in touch

by phone **07352 750090** or email upperdeesidechurches@gmail.com

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, Aboynne
Please contact Meg White
Tel 013398 80034

St Kentigern's, Ballater
Please contact Sabrina Humphrey
Tel 013398 85233

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 Sabine Muir at Ballater, by May 18th

CONTACTS :

Treasurer
Secretary
Lay Representative
Vestry Members

Sacristan
Organist
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
Susan Smith
Stuart Wright
Hilary Mutch
Stanley Ewen
Marcus Humphrey, Sabine Muir,
Douglas Mutch, Susan Smith,

ST. THOMAS'S

Anne Harper
Sue Burgess
Anne Harper
Warren Burgess
Lara Elson
Sheila Maxwell
Katherine Rider
Carol Simmons
Lesley Thomas
Sheila Maxwell
Lesley Thomas
Carol Simmons, Jo Elson, Lesley Thomas
Carol Birss
Warren Burgess, Carol Birss, Lara Elson,
Katherine Rider, Sue Burgess
Jill Binns
Warren Burgess
Michael Bruce

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: Susan Smith, Sue Burgess