



ST DAVID'S HIGH KIRK DUNDEE

THE KIRK NEWS

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FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends,

The time for writing a letter to you all in the Kirk News always seems to come around with indecent haste and as usual, it has taken me by surprise once again!!

At the end of September we celebrated our Harvest Thanksgiving, and as well as giving thanks for the harvest of land and sea that we enjoy in this country, this year our thoughts were directed to the country of Haiti, the poorest country in the world, and one that is still trying to recover from a devastating earthquake. Your generosity on that day to those people who are in so much need, was very much appreciated. Since then, hurricane Matthew has visited that land, bringing with it more death and destruction to a population struggling to cope. It hardly seems possible that nature, that can be so benign, can also be so cruel.

Of course this contrast between kindness and cruelty makes some wonder where God is in all of this. Yes, it is fine when he does good things for his people, but many want to say that if he is all-powerful he should not allow such destructive things as earthquakes and hurricanes to happen. And a large proportion of these who think about these things therefore want to go on to deduce that there can be no caring, loving God, and therefore no God at all.

Yes, it is certainly hard for us to understand why such awful things happen to so many people. Then in addition, there is the ongoing question of the situation in Syria, and so many other countries that we do not hear so much about. Many people are now saying that there can be no solution to the carnage in Syria, and that the death and destruction there will simply continue until there is nothing left. But should we really abandon all hope in situations like these? But the question that really needs an answer is, where is God in all the awful things of life?

This is not easy for any of us. That is, until you begin to look at the other things that are happening in situations like Haiti and Syria, the selfless, loving service that is also going on there.. The fact is that so many people are risking life and limb right now to try and help those whose lives are being devastated by the terrible events going on around them. Right now, there are people from Dundee in Haiti, giving all their energies to the work of rescuing and rebuilding. There are people from all around the world trying so hard to rehome those displaced by war, and there are doctors risking their lives day and night to help the injured in mind and body. And those of us who went to Israel recently, heard amazing stories of the most unlikely people risking everything to rescue Syrian children from bomb-damaged ruins. Yes, the fact is that our loving, caring God is everywhere, standing firm against evil, and revealing himself in the actions of Godly people who want to serve.

And what about us? What can we do to reflect the presence and the loving care of God, not only in the terrible situations abroad, but in some of the difficult situations in our own land and in our own city? Well, of course we can give to charities, as we did at harvest time. And of course we must pray. But more than that, we can put ourselves out to lend a practical helping hand to those who are in need more locally, as I know many of us already do. But there are endless opportunities to help, should we wish to take them.

It was Jesus who said, '**whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do for me.**' And it was mother Teresa who said that she saw the face of Christ in each individual who she saw in need. For all of us, what we do in the name of Christ will always reflect the love of our God into every situation.

With every blessing

Marion J Paton

Lo, I am with you always

*Wide fields of corn along the valleys spread;
The rain and dew mature the swelling vine;
I see the Lord in multiplying bread.
I see him turning water into wine,
I see him working all the works divine
He wrought when Salemward his steps were led;
The selfsame miracles around him shine;
He feeds the famished, he revives the dead;
He pours the flood of light on darkened eyes;
He chases tear, diseases, fiends away;
His throne is raised upon those orient skies;
His footstool is the pave whereon we pray.
Ah, tell me not of Christ in Paradise.
For he is all around us here today.*

John Charles Earle (Late 19th century)

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR SERVICES

As you are no doubt aware, Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Sundays and the Kirk Session has agreed that on each of these Sundays we have a joint service with our friends at Coldside Parish Church. On Christmas Day the service will be in our church and on New Year's Day the service will be at Coldside. Both weeks the service will be at the normal time of 11.00 am.

Full details of other services for the festive period will be in the next issue of 'The Kirk News'

PRAYER TIME

Our next Prayer Time will take place on Sunday November 6 at 10.30 am in the vestry. This very informal fellowship allows us to share some quiet time together and to come together in prayer. If you would like to join us we would be delighted to see you there. However, if you are unable to attend but would like us to include someone or something in our prayers please complete a request slip which is available at the front and back doors of the church.

FIONA ANDERSON

*A notice in St Andrew's Church of Scotland in Valetta:
Switch on your heart and mind. Switch off your mobile phone.*

PROPERTY UPDATE

Those who have been in the hall in the past few weeks will have noticed that the door between the hall and the Committee Room has been removed along with some of the wall panels. This is due to the discovery of dry rot. Fortunately it has been very limited in area, to just the area of the wall that is now exposed. Treatment of the area is under way and it will be left open for a short period of time to allow it to dry properly. Although a bit unsightly, the area is perfectly safe.

It is intended to make a start on the preparation of the wall in the Lower Hall to allow the installation of the stained glass windows, as has previously been reported, between Christmas and the New Year. We have chosen this period to keep disruption to the users of the hall to a minimum. Please bear with us as we remove the existing wall and replace it with one capable of supporting the windows in their back lit boxes. As part of this work the table which is presently in the Lower Hall and which was previously in the sanctuary at St David's will become surplus to requirements. It will be replaced with a smaller table as more space is needed to store the chairs. If anyone has a use for the table, or who knows of anyone who might be able to make use of it, please contact me as soon as possible and no later than mid- December. It needs to be removed before the work starts. **COLIN WILSON**

SUNDAY SCHOOL/YOUTH GROUP

We have welcomed back all the children and staff who were with us last year. Our activities include games, singing, prayer and Bible stories. The older children enjoy playing snakes and ladders using a large board and human pieces and they have to answer a Bible-related question to move on.

We are preparing again for the 'Shoe Box' Appeal and hope you will again help by giving items. The younger children have been looking at the story of Noah.

Eleven children from the Sunday School and the Brownies along with some of their friends enjoyed a 'Games Night' in the church hall. There was a variety of games including skittles, jenga, pairs, giant snakes & ladders and games on the Wii. The children told us they had enjoyed this evening very much I think their description was 'brill!' Thank you to all those who came along and help make this a success.

KAY HUSBAND

REV FIONA SMITH

You will remember Fiona who was with us some years ago before she became minister of Ness Bank Church in Inverness. She was invited to preach at Crathie church a few weeks ago and spent the weekend at Balmoral Castle. She had dinner there and was seated between Prince Philip and Prince Andrew. A memorable weekend!

FAIRTRADE

There will be a table with various items – sweets, cookies, biscuits etc - for sale in the lower hall after Sunday services on the run up to Christmas. Not sure how many weeks this will be available as it will depend on how quickly the items sell. Many thanks to all who have supported Fairtrade so far and will do over the coming weeks.

CHRISTINE WILSON

COMMUNITY CONTACT COMMITTEE

The retiring collection for the Haiti Project on Harvest Sunday amounted to £381, £40 of which was donated at the Fairtrade breakfast that morning. Many thanks to all who donated to the Project and supported the breakfast. The next two dates for Foodbank collections are Sunday November 6 and December 4 with donations being left as usual in the ladies room as you enter the church. Thank you to all who leave these donations for the Dundee Foodbank and St Salvador's Drop-in – they are always so grateful for all we hand in. **MARGARET MULGREW**

RAMBLERS

September. Only four ramblers took part which was unfortunate as it turned out to be a beautiful day and a very interesting walk. We set off in Edzell to walk to Gannochy bridge, a lovely riverside walk and a very turbulent river with all the rain we've had. We met a host of fungi enthusiasts, members of a naturalist society [not naturist!], on a field trip studying mushrooms in the area. I acquired a fossilized fungi on a small branch called "turkey tails" I was informed by the experts. The last part of the walk was a nightmare as the path was overgrown and dangerous and we had to come down on our rear ends for safety sake. All was forgiven when we found a fantastic coffee shop to revive us. A very enjoyable walk, however.

MARGARET EDMONDS

October. A sparkling sea, blue sky, warm sunshine and a gentle breeze - who could have asked for better conditions. After several woodland forays, we were so fortunate with our choice of the Fife Coastal Path from Crail to Anstruther. We tackled this particular part of the Coastal Path last Spring but due to unpleasant wind and hail it was not completed. Today was perfect! Ten enthusiastic walkers assembled in Crail and set off, negotiating several sets of steep steps, until the lower ground nearer the shore was reached. At a few points, stiles had to be scaled and one stone wall which caused us much hilarity as various methods to cross it were used. Most popular was the 'sitting on the wall' tactic and this proved the safest way across. Several young people coming after our group merely hopped over with no thought of the consequences of turned ankles or worse - always a consideration for us more senior ramblers. Sitting by another stone dyke for our picnic, we watched cormorants on the rocks by the sea, delighted when some were noticed diving into the water. The Isle of May stood out clearly, and although hazy in the distance, we were able to identify Berwick Law and the Bass Rock. On reaching Anstruther, we waited for the bus to take us back to Crail and our coffee stop before making the journey back to Dundee. The next walk will be on November 5 - no fireworks, we hope!

NORMA STURROCK

THE FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Club has resumed its meetings on Friday afternoons at 2 pm in the main hall. We would welcome new members for a very pleasant afternoon with good company, good entertainment and a good cup of tea. Our programme for the next few weeks is: Oct 28, The Food Train with Mr Grant Simmons; Nov 4, Dundee Women's Trail with Mrs Norma Sturrock; Nov 11, The story of Jane Haining with Miss Elizabeth Dickson; Nov 18, Lesley McLuckie entertains us with Dundee and local songs; Nov 25, Norma Smith to lead us in song followed by a bring and buy sale Please come and join us on any afternoon you can.

CATHERINE CARDOZO

THE GUILD

Our session has started and new members will be made very welcome to our meetings every Tuesday evening at 7.15 pm. Our programme is: Oct 25, Young Carers; Nov 1, J. M. Barrie, Rev Gordon Campbell; Nov 8, V & A, Peter Nurick; Nov 15, CHAS, Alison Rennie; Nov 22, Canal Journeys, Alistair Langlands; Nov 29, Financial Meeting; Dec 6, Christmas Flowers; Dec 13, Christmas Lunch at Queen's Hotel.

Our Coffee Morning is on Saturday October 29. Do come along and support us.

WILMA DUNCAN

At the Guild Gathering in September the Church of Scotland Moderator, The Right Rev Dr Russell Barr, told this tale of his early days as a minister. He was visiting an elderly parishioner and her husband and asked if they would like him to say a prayer. They agreed and while he prayed their dog kept barking and drowning him out. "Throw him out, he's just a nuisance", said the wife. He felt a hand on his shoulder and was ushered out of the house into the street. Said he never found out if she was referring to him or the dog!

RAINBOWS NEWS

Our late summer term is only seven weeks long but we were very lucky to be outside on four of these, playing lots of outdoor games. On our first evening we had an outdoor quiz based on the church and its grounds which tested the girls' observation and the second evening we spent at the Dudhope playpark where the girls spent a very happy hour on all the equipment. Our walk down was brisk but the walk back up to the Kirk was somewhat slower. Recently we had fun trying out circus skills such as juggling, tight rope walking (on the floor) and throwing bean bags into net targets. The girls then made paper plate clown faces.

On Sunday September 11, some of our Rainbows and one leader attended a "Senior Section Spectacular" fun day held at the Millennium Hall in Muirhead. All the girls had a great day and went home with a badge to remind them of the occasion. We finished the session with a campfire evening, singing songs around a pretend campfire and toasting marshmallows over tea lights (yes, it is possible!). Rainbows resume on Wednesday October 26 at 6 pm. Any girls aged five years to seven years will be made most welcome.

IRENE AIRD, Guide Leader

THANK YOU

On behalf of Dundee Foodbank, I would like to express our gratitude for your generous donation. This will help supply clients with a nutritionally based three-day emergency food parcel. Dundee Foodbank is committed to providing emergency food relief to individuals and families experiencing hardship throughout the City of Dundee and surrounding area. In 2015 we were able to assist over 8,000 people and we are currently feeding 150 persons a week. Clients can only access the Foodbank on three separate occasions over a six months period. Your donation enables us to continue to address this growing need and feed so many local people who are experiencing food poverty. Thank you for supporting the charity. It is much appreciated.

Ken Linton, Manager, Dundee Foodbank.

Norma Smith recalls this story Rev Dr Leslie Barrett told in the church some years ago:

It was battered and scarred and the auctioneer thought it scarcely worth his while to waste much time on the old violin. "What am I bid", he cried. "A dollar, two, who'll make it three? Three dollars once, twice, going for three". But no, from the back of the room an old man came forward and picked up the bow. Wiping the dust from the old violin and tightening the loose strings, he played a melody pure and sweet as a caroling angel sings. The music ceased and the auctioneer with a quiet voice said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"

"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? Two thousand and who'll make it three? Three thousand once, three thousand twice, and going, going, gone". The people cheered but some of them cried, "We do not quite understand. What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply "The touch of a master's hand". And many a one with life out of tune and battered and scarred with sin, is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd, much like the old violin. A mess of potage, a glass of wine, a game, and they travel on. They're going once, they're going twice, they're going and almost gone. But the Master comes and the foolish crowd never can quite understand the worth of a soul and the change that's wrought by the touch of the Master's hand. By Myra B. Welch

*From a church noticeboard –
The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind.
They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.*

Report on the International Summer School of the Royal School of Church Music held in Liverpool from the 8th -14th August 2016

The theme of International the Summer School was 'One Church, one Faith, one Lord,' and the sub-title was 'Towards harmony in the Post Reformation church.' The venue was the great city of Liverpool, and the Summer School was based between the two great cathedrals of that city, the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, also known to everyone as Paddy's Wigwam, and the Anglican Cathedral Church of Christ, two churches of very different traditions, but most significantly, linked by Hope Street. They are very different from each other, but both beautiful and versatile worship spaces. Some sessions were also held in other churches around the city, giving delegates a taste of several different architectural styles.. Accommodation was provided in modern University en suite rooms, and breakfast and dinner were also provided, but we had to provide our own lunch.

The introductory sentences in the brochure read 'On the eve of the 500th anniversary of the birth of the Reformation, we come together from all over the world to worship in unity the triune God with as diverse a programme of style, understanding, emphasis and tradition as only 500 years of recent Christian history could provide. Our goal is to celebrate the commonality which unites us, enjoy the diversity which enriches us, and learn from the insights of each other which inspire and refresh us on our pilgrim journey.' That was a very ambitious objective for just one week of study together, and by the end of the week we were all I think, suffering from information overload, and even, dare I say, musical indigestion, Each day began at 6-30 am and did not usually finish until around 10-00pm, so, despite the fact that everyone seemed to have a very enjoyable time, let no one ever say that conferences are just another name for a paid jolly!!

As usual, as far as I could gather, I was the only Presbyterian there, and as such, on this occasion, it fell to my lot to speak on the differences in emphasis between Presbyterian forms of worship and all the other Episcopal forms represented. Of course there is so much of the faith that we all share, but there are also important differences in emphasis that are not immediately obvious, as well as different interpretations of the same words used in worship. This means that it is right that we should take every opportunity to celebrate what we share, as well as seeking better to understand our differences, so that they too can be shared. I was also very privileged to be allowed to conduct morning worship in the Crypt Chapel of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, something I never dreamed would even be possible.

The whole conference shared in worship two or three times each day, and that worship embraced the various traditions represented. My only sadness was that, come Sunday morning, the conference divided, as the Roman Catholics went one way down Hope Street, whilst the rest of us went the other, for we cannot yet sit around the same table to share in the sacrament of Holy Communion, as was the ultimate vision of the two bishops so closely involved in the building of these two places of worship. However, the faith at the root of both traditions is the same, so eventually that too is sure to come.

The delegates to the conference and the staff were very friendly, and happy to talk about their own traditions and to learn about others. There were people from Africa, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Austria, Hong Kong, England, Wales, Ireland, and three of us from Scotland, and as usual, new friendships were forged and old ones revived. We ate in common and we worshiped for the most part in common, and there was no distinction drawn between leaders and delegates. We were all on the same pilgrimage together, all seeking after truth, all learning from each other, and a;; sharing ideas on how to enhance our worship through the gift of music.

Andrew Reid, the Director of the RSCM, welcomed us all with his keynote speech celebrating the faith that we all share, and his hope that we would learn more about each others traditions, and indeed about different traditions in our own denominations. Then it was down to business.

There were several different workshops to choose from and the first one that I attended was entitled 'What makes a good Hymn Book? This was a discussion led by the Rev Helen Bent, and after much discussion we came to the conclusion that although practical issues like the quality of the paper, the weight of the book and the size of the print were important, there was no formula for a hymn book that

would suit everyone. This session was followed by a choral rehearsal for the worship that we would share and supper.

The next day began with worship in the Crypt of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King which I led, a choral rehearsal and then a session on the development of English Choral Music which was the first of a series led by Dr. Hugh Benham, of the Guild of Church Musicians. This was very informative and challenging, as we were encouraged to sing some of the music that he spoke about, and was the first of a series of four, all of which I attended. This was followed by the first of two sessions I attended on contemporary congregational music which provided ideas to take home for future services. In the afternoon, I spoke about worship in the Church of Scotland and tried to highlight the very broad spectrum of musical traditions in our own church. I also spoke about the emphasis on the Word of God which is highlighted by the high pulpits in so many of our churches. This seemed to go down well as so many of the people there really thought that the Church of Scotland was really just the Church of England in Scotland! The evening was spent in rehearsing for Vespers, which we would sing in the Metropolitan Cathedral the next day and which was broadcast on Radio 3. The day ended with a concert given by the Millennium Youth Choir.

Wednesday began with worship, another session on English Church Music, and another on contemporary congregational music. The afternoon was spent in preparing for and participating in the Radio broadcast, and the day ended with a concert which really told the story of the life of Christ in words and music,

The pattern for Thursday was much the same, but with addition of a short talk by a young Irish composer about his religious music. This was followed by a session about Lutheran worship before we gathered to sing Vespers in the Lutheran tradition. The day ended with the Gala Dinner, a wonderful feast held in a redundant Roman Catholic Church where, after dinner we sang compline by candlelight and several anthems, much to the delight of the other diners.

The pattern for Friday morning was much the same, but in the afternoon we shared in a very interesting session on Christian song writing in England led by Graham Kendrick. This was a most inspiring session and it was interesting that the following day, when Graham gave his second session, there were at least twice as many people there! This was followed by a visit to the David Wells Organ Builders, who are the firm who look after the cathedral organs in Liverpool. The day ended with a devotional service of the Passion in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, a very moving and beautiful service.

On Saturday morning I fulfilled a life time ambition to play the organ in Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, and learned a lot about its construction, and then attended a theological debate entitled 'The Reforming Church' with Dame Gillian Weir, Andrew Reid and Rosemary Field, at which I was given the opportunity to speak. The day ended with the singing of a Vigil Mass.

On Sunday Morning the Conference divided with the Roman Catholics going one way down Hope Street and the rest of us going the other to sing in the Choral Eucharist in the cathedral. However, we all came together again for Choral Evensong before leaving for our various destinations.

Marion