



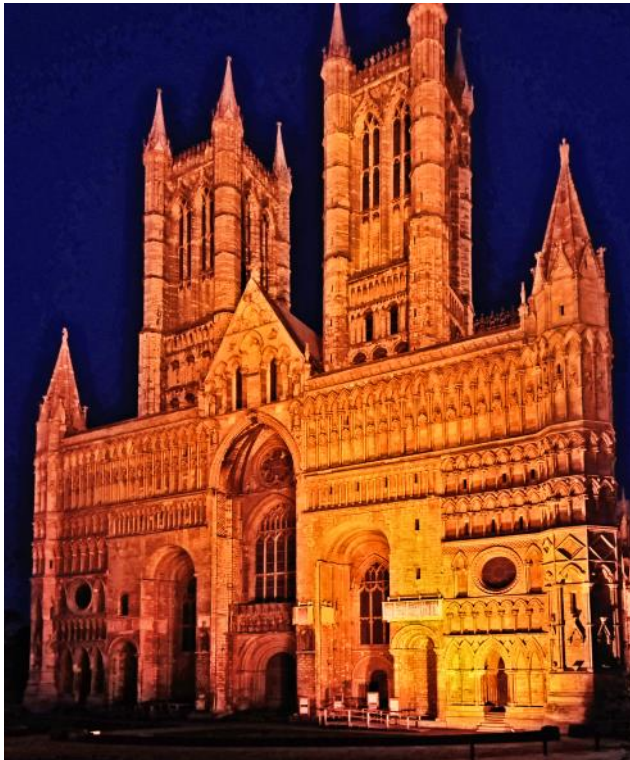
EAGLE

The magazine of the Church of St John the Evangelist

Forfar

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£5 per annum or 50p monthly



Lincoln Cathedral at night; picture taken by Gordon during a holiday before settling in Forfar

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Communication

As well as our own website address for St John's www.stjohnsforfar.co.uk you can also find information at the following on-line resources:

Inspires Online <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/inspires/>

Inspires Online is the free e-newsletter from the Scottish Episcopal Church – to subscribe please use the address above and then the sign-up box on the footer of that page.

Pisky.scot – <http://pisky.scot/> This provides the latest in thinking and discussion within the SEC. Previously Inspires Magazine offered a forum for information, discussion and debate. Now pisky.scot allows for that same conversation to be held more publicly and with the invitation to comment and get involved.

Diocesan website address <https://standrews.anglican.org/> – from there you can access all the Diocesan resources and subscribe to the Diocesan e-newsletter.

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2 MAGAZINE - Mrs Dorothy Bruce-Gardyne (01241 828 203)

St. Johns Eagle has suddenly gained in importance as a means of communicating, and as a result the decision has been taken to email a copy to all for whom email addresses are held. In addition, printed copies in a reduced (A5) format will be posted to those without email. Comments and /or extra email addresses welcome at gordongarman@aol.com

I write this pastoral letter sitting in the shade. The chilly northerly and easterly winds have eased, at least for a while, and spring extends forward to summer. The May flower is now fully in bloom. We find ourselves transported from Lent, when we went into lockdown to Pentecost and in Phase 1 of the easing of lockdown. We cannot be sure that as the weeks roll on that we will pass sequentially through to Phase 4 when we will move about much as we were in February this year. For those shielding or those not formally in the shielding group but have confined themselves in the same way because of the fears of the virus – family and friends are still as distant – no gathering in the garden or park for them. This is so difficult.

We take badly to this level of uncertainty. We draw on our faith in these uncertain times. Faith does not exclude doubt, it includes it. We have faith despite our doubts. Without the gathering of people in public shared worship, we miss the music, the coming together as a community as the body of Christ worshipping God. We seek something more from church than membership. We long for a spiritual home that connects with our whole life, not just somewhere to go on Sunday morning. Church is meant to be a place that nurtures and supports us as individuals along our full journey toward the ultimate goal: a lived experience of the communion of saints, a shared life together as one family, the reign of God “on earth as it is in heaven”.



I say, meant to be this, because I suspect it does not always fulfil this. Inevitably there are times when we find community elsewhere – as groups of volunteers around a cause, working in a community garden, with a book group, as a group of colleagues, or indeed online groups. Of course, it is all too easy to project unrealistic expectations on any community. No group can meet all our needs and we may change them from time to time, whilst others find groups hard places to be and will choose as few as possible.

However many or few groups we choose to be in, our church group is vital for our growth. By ourselves, we can accomplish very little. At the moment we bind ourselves together through prayer. It is weeks away yet, but as we come out of lockdown and we can meet again in our church building, restricted in how we worship yet sharing in worship, it will be a different experience from before. We must find common ground and common purpose to move forward. We will draw on “two or three gathered together” and maybe see our church afresh.


With love

Elaine



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WHAT DID YOU DO DURING LOCKDOWN ?

At this time (mid-May) life has changed for us all. When restrictions are lifted and we come together at St John's once more it will be time to reflect on what we have each done during this time of self-isolation.

Technology has helped us stay in touch – if only virtually – by telephone calls and (for some) the internet. Radio and television have provided news, current affair programmes and entertainment. But when we can interact maybe there will be an opportunity to share what WE have done during this time. For those creative people who welcomed the extra free time there are the fruits of their labours in paintings, knitted or crocheted or sewn articles; others may have penned poems; others may have read a (the) good book. For the gardener it has been a chance to plant, nurture and tidy; there have been opportunities to tackle decorating jobs that have been put off for too long. Others, a chance to share recipes and experiment with cooking with what has remained at the back of our cupboards. Crosswords and word puzzles have filled many happy hours with their challenges. The daily exercise (weather permitting) has allowed us to explore our neighbourhoods and maybe have the odd chat with neighbours – all conducted at a safe distance. For those less physically able it has been

a time to meditate, reflect on the past and look forward to a more socially inter-active time.

I finish by admitting that my own isolation has been largely spent in completing (not there yet!) a 4000-piece jigsaw which has taken over our dining table. I hope in post-Covid19-restrictive times to announce success or failure in finishing this task.

Stay well, stay safe. And as Vera Lynn and the Queen said – “We will meet again”.

Margaret Cousins

Thanks Margaret, if anyone else would like to share a photo or a few words of life in lockdown

NO CHANGE TO COLLEGE OF BISHOPS’ GUIDANCE AT PHASE 1 OF EASING LOCKDOWN

Following the announcement by the First Minister that Phase 1 of the Scottish Government’s route map will take effect tomorrow [Friday 29 May], the College of Bishops has confirmed that the minor easing of lockdown restrictions permitted under Phase 1 does not result in any change to existing guidance previously issued by the College of Bishops for the Scottish Episcopal Church. Church buildings therefore remain closed for the time being and the guidance issued on 23 and 26 March 2020 remains in place.

The Advisory Group established to provide guidance for SEC churches has had its first meeting and is working to address the respective phases of the Government’s route map. Initially, therefore, it is concentrating on guidance for Phase 2 which will be issued as soon as it is available.

When, in due course, the reopening of churches becomes permissible, as the College of Bishops has previously indicated, no church will be required to reopen against its will.

The vestry of each church will be responsible for assessing, in the light of guidance produced, whether it wishes to reopen and is in a position to put in place the measures which will be necessary for any such reopening. It will then need to approach the Bishop for consent to reopen. Guidance will indicate the appropriate process to follow but, in substance, the intention is that both the vestry and Bishop will need to be content before any reopening can occur.

FREEWILL OFFERING

Following my plea last month I am delighted to record that ten more of the congregation have made arrangements to continue their goodwill offering by payment directly into the church bank account. This is very much appreciated and I thank you sincerely. It doesn't matter how you wish to contribute be it weekly, monthly, every few months or annually it all helps to keep the church going through these difficult times.

While the lockdown is still with us it is probable that many of you are making purchases on line. If so don't forget 'Easyfundraising'. For every purchase made from selected organisations (and there are many of them) the church receives a percentage of the cost which although small adds up nicely and the great thing is that it is at no cost to you. Just log on to the web site

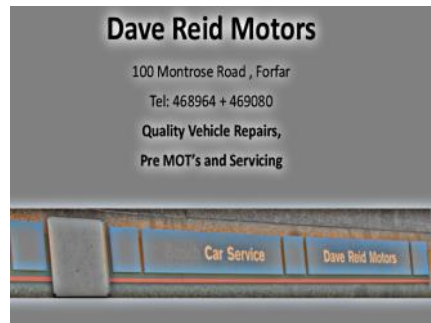
www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and register "St John's Episcopal Church, Forfar" as your chosen charity and that's all there is to it.

Then make sure you visit the shop/ organisation via the EFR site and spend!

Roger Cousins



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Vocations Sunday – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Some years ago the College of Bishops decided that the fourth Sunday of Easter, ‘Good Shepherd Sunday’, would be kept as ‘Vocations Sunday’, thereby offering the opportunity to consider what ‘calling’ means in the Church, and how our gifts may be best used in God’s service.

As a congregation it is always good to have a connection with those in training for authorised ministry and what better way with a fresh face in the pulpit on Vocations Sunday! However, as the reality of lockdown dawned there was the realisation that the church would not be open for public worship come the beginning of May. Having grappled with the basics of getting services online, as Rector I was thrilled when Dr Val Cameron, student with the Scottish Episcopal Institute (SEI), agreed to participate not only by recording a homily but also reading the gospel and leading intercessions. Enormous thanks to Val’s courage to rise to the challenge and help lead our worship. If you would like to view it is still available on You Tube at https://youtu.be/M_bcVdpD0fA.



Val adds: At one of the SEI’s residential training weekends the students were invited to volunteer to preach on Vocations Sunday. I try take any opportunity to practice sermons and homilies, so put my name on the list. I was really delighted when Canon Tomlinson advised me that I had been paired with St John’s in Forfar and I was put in touch with the Rector.

Due to Covid-19, I was unable to travel to Forfar, but with Elaine's guidance, I was able to record my homily. I had a few emails with Elaine about the IT platforms and format of her services. I have learned that churches are using various IT systems to engage with congregations, and I needed to ensure I was able to produce something that was compatible. I got to grips with iPad video recordings and used a shared 'drop box' folder.

For the homily I decided to talk about my own calling and how I thought that reflected the messages in the Gospel reading – John 10:1-10. My church journey has been quite long and I think I have been called several times during my life but things always got in the way; study, work, children and family, but like the Good Shepherd, the Lord is patient and waits to guide the stray sheep home.

I think we have all learned a lot about IT communications recently and what a blessing it has been, but conversely for those without the right kit, it identifies inequality and exclusion that we must try to address.

I look forward to the time when we can travel as I will go to Forfar in person to meet all of you.

Rector and Dr Val Cameron

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National Service—Volunteer for everything.

The advice given by most ex-servicemen is “Never volunteer for anything”. I decided to do the opposite and volunteer for everything. I was called up for national service on 18th September 1956 and posted to RAF Cardington for kitting out. After one week I was then posted to RAF Bridgenorth for training and allocation to a trade.

During my first week a corporal entered the back door of the hut and asked if anyone could drive, a few of us volunteered but as I was nearest him I was chosen and handed a nail and pointed out there was a sign in the ablutions which had fallen down. I was to drive the nail through it to hold it up.

This caused great hilarity in the rest of the hut. However the following Friday Corporal Brown entered the front door of the hut and asked if anyone could drive, I was the only one to volunteer and though I was at the other end of the hut he shouted be at the front door tomorrow at twelve noon in my best blue uniform and walked out. At noon the next day. Saturday, Brown turned up on the back of a motorbike which had a sidecar and I was told to get in the sidecar and off we went to Wolverhampton where Brown had bought an old banger of a Ford car. However Brown only had a provisional license to drive so I drove the car back to the camp. I was given a meal at his house as it was after meal time and I spent the evening with him and his wife and it was agreed I would teach him to drive.

I therefore missed quite a lot of the square-bashing teaching Brown to drive, he also got me a longer weekend home when we eventually got a



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home weekend. I also suspected he helped me get the position of an MT driver which was what I wanted to be. I also missed the passing out parade as Brown had stuck his car in a field and I had to help get it out.

At the end of training I was posted to RAF Weeton near Blackpool where I trained as a driver on cars and 3-ton lorries.

I was then posted to RAF Stafford and when five of us arrived Sergeant Savage of the MT section asked for three volunteers, I of course was first and two of my friends joined me. We were given 21 shillings and a travel warrant to go to London for a one day course at ROSPA house on driving. We went to the Palladium at night and saw Winny Attwell and David Hughes and two other stars for six shillings.

I volunteered for any runs especially at night where if you drove over three a.m. you were entitled to overtime of 23shillings and sixpence as the wage was only 26 shilling per week it was good money.

A few weeks later Sergeant Savage asked if I would volunteer to go to Lichfield on a heavy goods course as the person due to go was ill. I accepted and went to Lichfield for two weeks where I passed as a heavy goods driver. Two months later the same happened and I went back to Lichfield for a long low loader course, these were 52ft long Queen Mary trailers

I was at Stafford for 16 months then posted to RAF Morton Hall which was Bomb Disposal. This was a great posting and I stayed with them until I was demobbed 18th September 1958.

Albert Shepherd



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PITLOCHRY THEATRE TRIP

As promised I did get in touch with the theatre and they were commendably prompt in returning all the ticket money. The hole in the church finances has been re-filled and those who have already paid are due a refund. A number of you have already been in touch to say that you do not require a refund and to add it to our fund raising efforts – thank you. During this period of lockdown I have not been going to the bank and therefore have not drawn any cash so for those who would like a refund it may take a little while to process as I would prefer not to send out cheques with their attendant postage costs.

Roger Cousins

Link to the Scottish Episcopal Institute newsletter:

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/vocation-and-ministry/sei/sei-newsletter/>

If you are online, a resource for use in a time of lockdown:

<https://www.alonetogether.org.uk/>

Beki Cansdale, one of the current ordinands with the Scottish Episcopal Institute, has been supporting parents in the congregation in which she serves by providing resource materials for families and children. She produces material on a weekly basis. Beki has turned her weekly email into a blog which can be accessed by anyone - *Reflections, Prayers and Games*. Resources for families at home can be found at

<https://reflectionsprayersandgames.wordpress.com/>

Daily Hope—a Freefone number with hymns, reflections and prayers provided by the Church of England—0800 804 8044

Addendum—May 2020 Edition of the Eagle

Please note that the poem on the back page was beautifully written by Kitty O'Meara, an Irish American teacher, and was submitted for inclusion in the magazine by Bishop Ted. <https://www.irishcentral.com/culture/irish-american-teachers-poem-covid19-outbreak>

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