



EAGLE



The magazine of the Church of St John the Evangelist

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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.

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Growing together

Most Wednesdays at 8.30am some of the clergy in the Diocese gather to blether. We can't chat in a coffee shop because of pandemic restrictions and indeed because of geography. This was not something we did before COVID-19 but that we do now with the use of videoconferencing. It is a time of peer support and friendship. Numbers vary, some stay an hour, others for 10 minutes depending on what's in the diary. It's gentle, fun, we share stories, have a moan. We learn from one another as we talk about what's worked or not for our different congregations. Perhaps someone takes you through their thinking process on how they are approaching or experiencing something. Whilst we might be learning it's not about dispensing information about theology, online worship, pastoral ministry or the latest way to deal with COVID but about walking alongside each other as we experience life at the moment.

Jesus walked along side people too, particularly his disciples. He shared his wisdom with those who wanted to learn from him. He taught his disciples through his lifestyle, learning from life. His disciples were by his side and in watching him they learned the cycle and rhythm of his life, as he moved from prayer and solitude to teaching and service in the community. Jesus' teaching was not mere conceptual information rather he introduced them to a lifestyle and invited those around him to live with him. He invites us to do the same.

"But the crowds got to know where he had gone and they went after him. He made them welcome and he talked to them about the kingdom of God and he cured those who were in need of healing" (Luke 9:11). I imagine the apostles standing at Jesus' side, watching him, noticing how he does things: how he talks to people, how he waits, how he listens, how he's patient, how he depends upon God, how he takes time for prayer, how he doesn't respond cynically or bitterly, but trustfully and yet truthfully. Can you imagine a more powerful way to learn?

With love

Elaine



Clergy colleagues in the Diocese

Front cover: Aconites at Reswallie

Ancient font from Restenneth in St. John's Church

Caring for God's Creation

Last month I wrote about the SEC's intention to work towards being carbon neutral by 2030 and indicated that I would highlight the issue of the climate emergency over the next editions of the Eagle. The target is ambitious and one which will stretch our resolve, but it is vital. As part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, we subscribe to the Five Marks of Mission, the fifth of which is to safeguard the integrity of creation and to renew and sustain life on earth. Human activity has negatively altered our planet. Our climate has changed, extreme storm events have intensified, oceans are warmer, sea levels have risen, droughts and floods occur more frequently, and weather patterns have become more unpredictable. This risks health, threatens food and water security, and increases the likelihood of conflict and the displacement of people. Those most adversely affected are those who already suffer the greatest inequalities. There is a compelling need to listen to all voices but particularly the voices of our young people who will inherit the successes and challenges of what we do and don't do now. Salvation in Christ calls us to responsibilities beyond ourselves.

In 2015 the world came together in the Paris Agreement to adopt universal legally binding targets to limit the impacts of climate change; to keep our increasing world temperature well below 2.0°C above pre-industrial times and aiming to 1.5°C, being carbon neutral by 2050 and with increasing levels of ambitions as we head towards the deadline. Some current estimates are that 1.5°C is only a decade away and that it is now too late for gradual, incremental steps. We are hearing more on the news now about having to act at individual level, in households, in business and by Government. The Church must play its part too – as an organisation and as individuals. Every extra mile walked instead of driven, sourcing our heat, light, and power from renewable sources, repairing instead of throwing away, all add up. At the core of it all is respect and love for our neighbour, known and unknown, local and global, and indeed respecting our own lives and environment. There is much to do, and every positive action is worthwhile.

Rector



Restenneth Priory



No one who has knelt on the hallowed turf of Restenneth Priory could fail to appreciate that it is a site which has been saturated in prayer for many centuries. For over 1300 years, souls have knelt in worship, in penitence and in petition on this consecrated ground. That the ruins remain is a testimony to God's grace.

It is:

"A sacred place, a telling place, where Heaven and Earth meet." (Celtic Prayer Book).

This was surely revealed by God to Nechtan, King of the Picts, when he came down from his nearby Dun to be baptised, with his court, by St. Boniface in the year 710. Here he built the first stone church ever to be erected in Scotland. The mother church at the centre of his Pictish kingdom, and now the oldest structure within the boundary of Angus.

The same year, King Nectan sent word to Coelfrid, Abbot of Wearmouth. He asked for people to come and instruct him in the Roman faith, and for masons to establish churches in the Roman style. His request was granted and it is believed that St. Peter's, at Restenneth, was the first to be built. It was known to the locals as "*Egglespether*", that is, St Peter's "*ecclesia*" or church.

Stuart, writing in the *Scottish Archaeologia* spoke of:

"...the square portion of Restenneth Tower (is) a part of the structure of the 8th century, and thus the oldest fragment of ecclesiastical building that Scotland can show."

W. Douglas Simpson, writing in the *Antiquaries' Journal* (1963), explains that the original porch was heightened to form a tower. He suggests that this was not intended for defence, as its structure does not resemble those of the Irish round towers at Brechin and Abernethy.

It was during the 12th century that this ancient church was developed into a priory of canons of the order of St. Augustine. Its earliest charter was granted by David I (1124 – 1163) and by a charter of Malcolm IV, between 1159 and 1163, the Priory was made a cell or subordinate of Jedburgh Abbey.

The order of “canons” sat between that of ordained monks and clergy and although they lived under claustral rule, they were also allowed to work as parish priests. Augustinian canons or “Austin canons” as they were known in Britain, wore a white tunic under a black cloak and hood. A contemporary writer said of them:

“Augustine’s rule is more courteous than Benedict’s. Among them one is well-shod, well clothed, well fed. They go out when they like, mix with the world, and talk at table.”

On August 30th 1243, the Church of St. Peter at Restenneth was consecrated by David de Bernham, Bishop of St Andrews.

Within the enclosure can still be seen the remains of the *piscina*. This was a basin and drain in a niche south of the altar, into which water was emptied which had been used to wash the sacred vessels. Also the *sedilia*, seats for the officiating clergy, in a niche on the south side of the chancel. Beside these the *ambry* a small recess for the church vessels.

The ancient font, can be seen on entering St. John’s Episcopal church in Forfar and is still in use.

Lynne Topping, February 2021



Celebrating Petertide

Restenneth Priory

2019

Keeping fit during lockdown

During the first meeting of the Lent Course on Thursday 18th February, we had a discussion about the 'changes for the better' that lockdown had brought about in our lifestyles.

At the beginning of the first lockdown last year, the level of global pollution plummeted, as cars and lorries disappeared from the roads.

Those of us who have been unable to go out to work have returned to post-war resourcefulness, trying new recipes and cooking with fresh ingredients, tackling DIY jobs around the house rather than depending on calling a tradesman.

One member of the group explained that as an elderly person who lives alone, it was rare to see anyone during the day. Now - she is visited *at least* once a day by people making sure that she receives the help she needs during these difficult times.

For myself, I started a daily morning work-out with an online trainer, eat far less meat and try to go for a walk every day.

Please write in and tell us what you have been doing.

Caroline Townsend sent us these pictures and comment:-



"Socially distanced exercise."

Intrepid athlete Emily Townsend braves the ice on Rescobie Loch to keep fit in lockdown., with the help of Hugh Graham-Watson in the support vessel!

St. John's Auction

Following the suggestion in the Christmas edition of the "Eagle" that we should hold an online auction in the New Year, we now have pleasure in offering the following items for sale:



Lot 1 Desk Set



Lot 2 Nivea Gift Set



Lot 3 "Despicable" DVD



Lot 4 "Grow Your Own Chillies" Kit



Lot 5 Pillbox
Week to view



Lot 6 Sponge Bag
and hand cream



Lot 7
Multi-tool pen



Lot 8
Toiletries gift set



Lot 9
Thermal Slippers



Lot 10
Bath / Shower set



Lot 11
Scottish Soap



Lot 12
Face mask kit



Lot 13
Restored cane chair



Lot 14
Linen basket



Lot 15
Brass table lamp



Lot 15 Denby 8 piece
Plus 2 cups



Lot 16 Golden retriever plushy
by Ikea



Lot 17 Trespass extreme weather
jacket size XS - as new



Lot 18 Handmade artisan vase

Have fun choosing your item(s) and submit your bids to me :

lynnetopping@hotmail.com 07396 355564 or 01307 850297

All bids are completely confidential .

Bidding will close at 5pm on Friday 26th March.

Payment by cheque made out to "St. John's Church" on delivery of item.

As the church and buildings have been closed for much of the past year, it has not been possible to hold our usual fundraising events.

Please bid generously for the items offered for sale and if you don't see anything you like, perhaps consider making a donation?

ONLY THE ENGLISH COULD HAVE INVENTED THIS LANGUAGE !

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hices.

If the plural of man is always called men,
Then shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language.
There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger;
Neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
English muffins weren't invented in England.
We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes,
We find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square,
And a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing,
Grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?
Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend.
If you have a bunch of odds and ends
And get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?
If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?
If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up speaking English
Should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.
In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?
We ship by truck but send cargo by ship.
We have noses that run and feet that smell.
We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway.
And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same,
While a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language
In which your house can burn up as it burns down,
In which you fill in a form by filling it out,
And in which an alarm goes off by going on.

And, in closing, if Father is Pop, how come Mother is not Mop?

I WOULD LIKE TO ADD THAT IF PEOPLE FROM POLAND ARE CALLED POLES THEN
PEOPLE FROM HOLLAND SHOULD BE HOLES AND THE GERMANS, GERMS

This wonderful poem was submitted by Ingrid Jäckel, whose native language is German and who also speaks French!

Anyone know a similar one about Scots?

Bishop's Lent Appeal

Thank you to those who sent in nominations for the Bishop's Lent Appeal. After consideration, I am putting forward two charities for this year's Appeal:

- 1) *Start Up Stirling, who run a foodbank and other essential community services throughout Stirlingshire, with the support of many churches including our own in the area.*
- 2) *Angus Creative Minds, which is a not-for-profit centre with the focus of using creativity to benefit health and well-being, also supported by our churches in the area.*

These are local projects, but I hope that in Lent the rest of us might think of 'extending hands' beyond our own area to support a local charity elsewhere.

A pdf of the Bishop's Appeal leaflet will be shared with congregations soon.

- Bishop Ian

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021

This year the World Day of Prayer Service will be via Zoom on Friday, 6th March at 2.00 p.m. Access can be gained by Zoom link -
Webinar ID 895 9398 3883 Passcode 901656

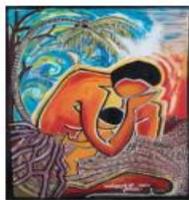
The host Church is Augustine United Church in Edinburgh with participants from across Scotland. The Service has been written by the Christian women of Vanuatu and is entitled 'Build on a Strong Foundation'.

Access to the Service can be obtained using a landline on 0131 4601196 and you will be asked for the above webinar ID and passcode. There may be costs attached.

The Service will be posted later on the World Day of Prayer website and Facebook pages.

With Covid-19 restrictions in place we are not able to meet in one of the Forfar Churches as we would normally but for those who are able to access Zoom meetings the Service on March 6th will give us a chance to gather together in a virtual way.

MARGARET COUSINS



'Build on a strong foundation'

Written by Christian women of Vanuatu

The Scottish Committee of the World Day of Prayer invites you to join them in a live Zoom service at 2pm on Friday 5th March. It is being hosted by Augustine United Church in Edinburgh with participants from across Scotland. For joining details see the WDP Scotland website <http://www.wdpscotland.org.uk/download/WDP21-Edinz.pdf> or the WDP Facebook page. Sheila Crichton of St Margaret's has service booklets available if you wish one. Please contact the Rector for Sheila's phone number should you wish one.

If you do not have internet access you can join by phoning 0131 4601196. You will be asked for an ID and passcode - please contact the Rector to obtain these details. Your call to the service may involve costs depending on your telephone contract.

The service will be posted on the website and Facebook page for later access.

10 Days of Prayer start on Tuesday 23rd February and information will be posted on the WDP website <https://www.wwdp.org.uk/> and on their Facebook page every morning. This is to focus prayer on Vanuatu.

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APPEAL

It was brought to our attention at the last vestry meeting that the paintwork on the walls of the Mary Chapel need attention.

In order to carry out the work, a scaffolding framework will be necessary.

If anyone knows of, or has access to such a thing—could you please contact the Rector.

Thank you.