



The Scottish Episcopal Church
The Parish Magazine of
St John the Evangelist Forres

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Candlemass to Easter

The Eagle

2016

RECTORS RAMBLINGS — *I used to think people were joking when they said “the older you get the faster the years pass” , now that I am a little more mature myself I am beginning to think that there is some truth in that saying. As Easter rapidly approaches, both at a church level and at a personal level there are many challenges and potential changes looming.*

Firstly for the Church. Our Diocesan Synod in March will discuss new ways of working and of finding significant additional financial resources to increase the number of our Diocesan priests.

Secondly for the Church at Provincial level is the emerging detail regards the ‘Columba Agreement’ which proposes that the Church of Scotland and the Church of England may work closely together.

Thirdly with last weeks Primates Meeting in Canterbury sanctioning the Episcopal Church of America and effectively putting them on the naughty step for the next three years because they changed their Canon Law to allow same gender marriage in church. Our own General Synod in Edinburgh this summer will discuss the possibility of the Scottish Episcopal Church altering our Canon Law to allow same gender marriage in the Scottish Episcopal Church. If that comes to pass, as I hope it will, I wonder if we too will be placed on the naughty step!

The change I allude to at a personal level is in respect of my retirement. I shared at our Annual Congregational Meeting last November that I was planning to retire this summer and can now say that my last Sunday at St John’s will be 31st July. Sue and I will be moving to our home in Tain, Ross Shire, during the first week of August.

Fr Cliff



Sponsored off road bike ride from Kinloss to Kinlochlaggan

Findhorn Bay was a dull grey in the early morning light as I left Kinloss and headed on the cycle path to Forres, over the Bridge Findhorn Bay was a dull grey in the early morning light as I left Kinloss and headed on the cycle path to Forres, over the Bridge at Sueno's Stone to the start of the Dava Way.

The old railway rises deceptively through Altyre Woodlands to the viaduct at Edinkillie. It is only from the viaduct itself that you can really get a feel of the height and appreciate the magnificent engineering of its day.

From here on, the old railway track is over the open moor and I was glad of the extra top I had started with. It goes round the back of the Knock of Braemoray, skirting Moidach moor with a derelict steading bearing witness to the poor quality of the land.

I was surprised to see a large collie dog at the side of the track, but relieved

to find it was only a painted, but realistic wooden model! Soon I was at Dava Station with a short detour on to the road to avoid going through the cottage gardens. Within a mile you are at the highest point on the line and so began the gentle descent to Grantown.

Just outside the town, near a narrow cutting that defies belief that the trains could pass through it, a Redcoat Soldier stands guard to watch for any stragglers from Culloden – again only a wooden statue. I planned to carry only reserve food and so McLean's in Grantown was the first stop for a scotch pie and Chelsea bun.

Much revived and already half an hour up on schedule the next section on road to Nethybridge sped by. From here there is a path via the RSPB Forest Lodge towards Loch Morlich.

At one point it divided with no signpost, but fortunately a land rover had turned just ahead of me, so after a quick sprint, I caught him to ask directions - and yes I had taken the wrong turn. Back on track and I was riding through the amazing natural scots pine woodland and enjoying the approach to the Cairngorms from a different angle.

The Green Lochan (Am Lochan Uaine) at the side of the forest road is a must to see-it really does live up to its name . Only a mile to Loch Morlich and another scheduled fuel stop – this time a bacon roll and coffee. Much refreshed I sped along the cycle track to Coylumbridge and then round Loch an Eilan to get into Inshriach Forest and the long climb up Glen Feshie, with the mountains towering above me. Now came the last of the long woodland sections as I turned back into Inshriach Forest and headed for Drumguish, across a mixture of moorland and forest.

Several derelict farmsteads are testament to the hardiness of earlier generations to have lived in such isolated places. A short section of road brought me to Ruthven Barracks – another milestone reached.

Although buoyed by my progress the miles were beginning to tell as I

rode across the moor from Ruthven to Phones Lodge on the old General Wade's road. It is very exposed and the wind was against me making the narrow tracks difficult to negotiate.

It seemed an age till I could get past Craig Dhu hill away to the west but finally I reached the Lodge and was able to enjoy a speedy decent on tarmac to the A9. My target was now within reach as I passed Glentruim Lodge and settled in for a steady 4 miles to Catlodge where I knew the Pottery would provide much needed refreshment. A huge slice of carrot cake and coffee did the trick.

Ahead lay the final 10 miles including the lower tracks of Wolftrax (the purpose built mountain biking centre) and then I was standing on the beach at Loch Laggan where the sun came out to mark the end of the ride. Not quite true- I had then to ride the 12 miles back to Newtonmore to our friend's where more cake and coffee were provided until my lift came to collect me.

The ride raised a total of £2285 for Highland Hospice and I would like to express my thanks for all those who so generously sponsored me.

VESTRY SECONDS

I am running out of excuses for the infrequency of these Vestry Seconds - but you might be able to detect some reasons in what follows. Since I last wrote, there were Vestry meetings in September and October; an Annual Congregational Meeting in November, followed by a further Vestry meeting in December. Much of what was discussed at those meetings has been taken over by two events; the resignation in September of our Treasurer, Alison and our Rector's announcement at the ACM of his intention to retire at the end of July.

Other than discussions regarding finding someone to replace Alison, the September meeting considered projected figures for 2015/16, which made it apparent that our deficit for this financial year might be in the region of £8,000. This figure will be revised in the light of a saving on stipend and

pension costs during the interregnum - and a considerable expense in carrying out significant work in the Rectory before appointing a new priest. Nevertheless, it is clear that we MUST find ways of making savings and of increasing giving. The Fund Raising Committee work extremely hard and no more can be expected of them. Before our Bishop will appoint a replacement for Cliff we need to prove that we can fund stipend and pension (as well as maintaining everything else) for at least 5 years.

The October meeting heard reports that general maintenance had continued with a replacement washbasin water heater in the hall, lights fixed around the hall and the Rectory and normal garden maintenance. Knowing in advance our Rector's intention to retire, the Vestry agree to put on hold outstanding Quinquennial work such as re-wiring and the replacing of Velux windows in the Rectory until the interregnum. However the Vestry did agree to a (long-term) temporary fix to the problem in the hall where the lathe and plaster wall was deteriorating where it meets the boarding by fixing a piece of planking above the boarding. At the December meeting it was also agreed to go ahead obtaining quotes for fixing a perennial problem of rainwater overflowing the existing drainage system by fitting a slightly larger diameter down pipe, getting the gutters cleaned and, at the same time, making permanent the temporary replacement of some guttering which had fallen down.

The ACM saw the appointment of Kirsteen Mitcalfe to the Vestry with Derek Bedford and myself being re-elected Lay and Alternate Lay Representatives respectively. It also saw our Rector announce his plan to retire. Under Canon Law, priests need to give 3 months notice of retirement and cannot formally notify the Bishop prior to that time. Congregations cannot start the process of seeking a new priest until the Bishop has been informed so - before you ask - "No, the Vestry are not doing anything about it yet" - because we can't. (That doesn't mean we aren't thinking about what we will have to do and preparing ourselves accordingly.) Gareth Whyment volunteered to look at taking on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups role from Sue Piper.

The Fund Raising Committee reported that the Town Hall had been booked for coffee mornings on 14 Nov 2015 (raised £600) and 12 March 2016. St Leonards Hall had been booked for a coffee morning in

November 2016. The Strawberry Tea had raised £285. Planned concerts were Music for a While in October (raised £128) and Musick Fyne in December (raised £640). The Whist Drive had raised £75.

The Rector reported that both the Boy's Brigade and the Air Training Corps were flourishing. The collection at the Carol Service in aid of the Boys' Brigade raised £318.

Having had a chance to consider matters, I (foolishly ?) agreed to take on the role of Treasurer. I am now even more aware of how much effort Alison must have put in taking over the role from Julian who had done it for so many years. I can only repeat the Vestry's gratitude for all she achieved. I hope to produce an interim report for the congregation on our finances in the near future.

Grant Swain

AUCTION & PANCAKE PARTY

on Shrove Tuesday, 9th February at 7.00 p.m. in St John's Church Hall. Items for auction can be delivered to the Rectory (please leave in the front porch) or if you need items uplifted please phone the Rector 672856. Please be sure to fill out a 'Auction/Promise Slip' (available in church) and attach to your sale item. The event is open to all so please bring neighbours and friends.



CONFIRMATION

Canon Cliff is planning to hold Confirmation Classes after Easter with Confirmations taking place Sunday 8th May. Please speak to Canon Cliff if you would like to be prepared for Confirmation.



NOTICES

VESTRY MEETING - Monday 1st February at 7.00 pm in the Parish Room.

PANCAKE PARTY & AUCTION – Tuesday 9th February. Please complete the Auction Slips for Promises and Items for Sale. Items for sale can be delivered to the Rectory.

OLIVE OIL SUNDAY – Mathis & Marianne will be holding their annual La Jimena Stall, selling olive oil and citrus fruits and other produce from Spain, following the 10.00 am on Sunday 21st February.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - This year, it will be celebrated in St Margaret's Church on 4th March at 2.00 pm. It will have a Cuban theme and everyone in the Forres area is warmly invited. It is hoped many representatives of each local church will come along to share fellowship. Sheila Biggs and June Airey from St John's will be helping present the service, but if you would like to take a fuller part, too, why not join them at the Planning Meeting in St Margaret's at 2pm on Friday 9th February?

DIOCESAN SYNOD – Saturday 5th March at the Kingsmills Hotel Inverness.

COFFEE MORNING – Town Hall Saturday 12th March.

VESTRY MEETING - Monday 4th April in the Parish Room at 7.00 pm.

WHIST DRIVE – Saturday 9th April at 7.00 pm in St John's Church Hall.

BOYS BRIGADE COFFEE MORNING – in St John's Church Hall from 10 – 12 on Saturday 23rd April. Please support this event.

QUIZ – Saturday 30th April at 7.00 pm in St John's Church Hall.

CONFIRMATION – Sunday 8th May, Bishop Mark will be our celebrant today for the Confirmation of Emma Moffatt. Please hold Emma in your prayers as she prepares for her Confirmation.

VESTRY MEETING – Monday 6th June in the Parish Room at 7.00 pm.

READERS ROTA

DATE	READER	OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT	GOSPEL
31 January CANDLEMASS	Gareth Whymant	Malachi 3.1-4	Hebrews 2.14-18	Luke 2.22-40
7 February Next before Lent	Anne Docherty	Exodus 34.29-35	2 Corinthians 3.12-4.2	Luke 9.28-43
14 February LENT	Gill Horrocks	Deuteronomy 26.1-11	Romans 10.8-13	Luke 4.1-13
21 February LENT 2	Wiz Latham	Genesis 15.1-12,17-18	Philippians 3.17-4.1	Luke 13.31-35
28 February LENT 3	Shelia Biggs	Isaiah 55.1-9	1 Corinthians 10.1-13	Luke 13.1-9
6 March LENT 4 (Mothering Sunday)	George Latham	Joshua 5.9-12	2 Corinthians 5.16-21	Luke 15.1-3,11-32
13 March LENT 5	Barbara Westie	Isaiah 43.16-21	Philippians 3.4-14	John 12.1-8
20 March PALM SUNDAY	June Airey	Isaiah 50.4-9	Philippians 2.5-11	Luke 22.14- 23.56 or Luke 23.1-49
27 March EASTER DAY	John Horrocks	Acts 10.34-43	1 Corinthians 15.19-26	John 20.1-18 or Luke 24.1- 12
3 April Easter 2	Jenny Swain	Acts 5.27-32	Revelation 1.4-8	John 20.19-31

This edition of the Eagle is available in full colour on St John's Website.

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