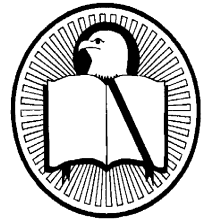


**The Scottish Episcopal Church**  
**The Parish Magazine of**  
**St John the Evangelist Forres**

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## **The Eagle**

Feb / March / April

*It may still feel like winter but  
Easter is fast approaching!*

*Our Easter Services are advertised  
in this edition of the Eagle, please  
do everything you can to attend  
yourselves and encourage family  
and friends to come as well.*



*Our Lent Journey has been blessed by the wonderful and  
inspiring series of studies given by Deacon Anthony. Please let  
us continue our journey to Easter by walking with our Lord  
through Holy Week, all of it, every step! All too often we  
attend the Palm Sunday Service and then cut straight to the  
Happy Ending on Easter Day. In doing so we miss so much  
especially the Triduum, which as the name suggest is one  
service stretching over three days - Maundy Thursday, Good  
Friday and the Easter Vigil.*

*These three days embody the very essence of our faith I very  
much look forward to sharing them with you. With love and  
blessings.*

**Father Cliff**

# **REPORT ON DIOCESAN SYNOD HELD AT INVERNESS ON SATURDAY 9th MARCH 2013**

Present from St Johns:- Dean Cliff, Grant Swain and Derek Bedford.

- 1) Synod commenced with Sung Eucharist, celebrated by Bishop Mark in the Cathedral, after which we all repaired to Eden Court for coffee and the meeting.
- 2) New members were welcomed, and last year's Minutes approved, with a minor correction, as Canon was sometimes spelt "Cannon", and Canon Alison Simpson from Nairn felt she had been classified as a "weapon of war!"
- 3) Some elections took place, but more volunteers were required. As only members were present, (Clergy and Lay Reps and Alternates), it was felt nominations should be sought before the meeting, and a wider attendance encouraged. Synod is not a closed meeting!
- 4) Dean Cliff presented his Report, detailing maintenance and repair programmes, which mainly focussed on Churches, and reminded us that Clergy housing has to be upgraded as well. The main work at the Cathedral is the new door, which we used for the first time, for wheelchair access, and disabled facilities. As this was his final year coming up as Dean, he thanked everyone for their cooperation, and particularly the congregation at St Johns for our support
- 5) Canon Alison reported on the Diocese statistics, which showed a small increase in congregation numbers, but fewer baptisms compared to the previous year, however communicants at Easter, and in general public worship were up by 1,462.
- 6) The Standing Committee and Protection Officers Reports followed, and Dr Denise Mcfarlane reported that 23 Charges had not sent in their Annual Report. (We were one of the few who had!) The Bishop demanded these be sent in by Easter, or action would be taken.

7) The Treasurers Report provided welcome news that Quota giving was up, and whilst some Charges were still lagging, others like ourselves were giving more than assessed, and the Diocese had finished the year with a small surplus. This meant the strictures about exceeding Budget by our Regional Synod had been accepted, and the Admin Board had taken effective control. A considerable proportion of the saving was due to a drop in numbers and cost by a resignation, but the saving was safeguarded by no re-appointment. The Budget for this year now balances projected income and expenditure.

8) Lunch was followed by Provincial business, and an update from the Provincial Protection Officer – Mr Donald Urquhart.

This was followed by first readings of Canon 50 concerning Lay Ministry nominees, who would be entitled to attend Synod, but with limited voting rights. This was approved.

Next was Canon 53, which allowed reasonable expenses for a Cleric who was appealing against a decision by his/her bishop. This was also approved.

9) There followed the Bishop's Charge, where he stated that after 5 years in the role, and reorganising the administration of the Diocese, he had been reflecting on his "missionary" role. He was thinking about "what there is to do, and where we should be, rather than what we were! This is about our mission to the world, rather than the defence of existing conditions". We need to share even our limited resources. While there were remarkable examples of mission and ministry in the Diocese, these were achieved by working together as a team, and this was how we should work in the future.

He wants to generate enough wealth in the Diocese for a strong ordained ministry, and to pay for 11 stipendiary clergy. (We have 8 at present, so his previous emphasis on training and curacies stands). This, even with the use of retired clergy (non stipendiary), lay ministers and readers, implies sharing between various charges. He reminded us that each church, altar, priest shares their ministry with the Bishop. His plan may take 10 years to come to fruition, and will require the sharing of resources, being one Diocesan family caring for all its members.

10) The next report was by Members of the Mission and Ministry Board, who developed the theme of the Bishop's Charge under the title of "Radical Hospitality", which will involve change, if we are to become "beacons of the light of Christ" – welcoming and sharing resources as interdependent Charges. This could involve new patterns of ministry, redistribution of clergy, as well as more lay responsibility. The emphasis should be on youth involvement and outreach, not necessarily in churches. The final quote – "The worship is over, let the service begin!"

It was stressed these changes would take time to implement, probably a 10 year programme; and the whole concept would be debated at next year's Synod, but meantime we should give thought to this "vision".

11) There followed a report from the Admin Board, by the Chair Douglas Campbell, detailing its work in reviewing employment contracts, formulating the budget, and monitoring expenditure.

I then gave a brief report on the Stewardship Campaign which was run by most Charges throughout the Diocese. Most reported an increase in pledged giving, although there was a degree of "shyness" by some charges in forecasting their outcome, and there we shall have to wait for their year end accounts! So far we have reported a £20,000 up lift in regular giving, across the Diocese as well as one off gifts of £5,000; and a gift of £4,000 direct to the Diocese. In addition the representative of a Glasgow charity saw our literature, and has promised £15,000 to the Bishop, spread over the next three years. The results therefore have been very encouraging, and should help the Diocese finances for the future.

12) The Bishop then concluded proceedings with a blessing, and the request that we think about how we celebrate the 900th anniversary of the Diocese of Moray in 2014.

Derek Bedford  
Lay Representative.

12/03/13



**LENT STUDY** – the Lent Study this year will be run over six sessions in the Church on Thursday evenings at 7.00 pm from February 14<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> inclusive.

**RETIREMENT** – Our Organist, Sheila Biggs, is retiring on Easter Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> March. Sheila has been organist at St John’s for many years now and the Vestry would like to invite the congregation to show their

appreciation by contributing to a retirement gift. Contributions please to the Treasurer, Julian Rudd.

**CHRIST IN THE PASSOVER** - Barry Barnett from “Jews for Jesus” will be speaking at the Lighthouse Baptist Church on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30 pm.  
ALL WELCOME.

**IF CAMPAIGN MEETING** - Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March from 2.30 - 5.00 pm in St Leonards Church Hall.

**BAROQUE GROUP MARVEL OF PERU** - Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April. More details to follow please reserve the date.

**VESTRY MEETING** – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April at 7.00 pm in the Parish Room.

**MORAY CONCERT BRASS** – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April. More details to follow please reserve the date.

**ST DROSTAN SYNOD** - Social event at 3.00 pm at St Marnan, Aberchirder Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April. ALL WELCOME.

**FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE** – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May at 2.00 pm in the Parish Room. NEW MEMBERS WELCOME.

**BISHOP MARK VISITING** - Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June Bishop Mark is visiting the Charge.

## Vestry Seconds

Whoa – hold the horses. I've hardly recovered from Christmas, it's almost Easter – and I have two Vestry meetings to report on.

Our Treasurer will be reporting on the outcome of the Stewardship Campaign, but the Time and Talents survey has already had one positive outcome as it allowed the Vestry to identify Sally Ross Mowat as a potential Vestry member. A lack of nominations at the ACM had left the Vestry one short so, in accordance with the Constitution, the Vestry has appointed Sally to fill the casual vacancy until the next ACM.

Regarding Stewardship, I have been asked to remind all of you who pledged to increase your donations to St John's to actually do it. The pledge alone is not enough, you will have to write to your bank to alter your standing order or make sure you put the promised extra into the envelope. Remember, if you pay tax then you can gift aid your donation – which costs you nothing, but allows St John's to reclaim back the tax you paid. So, if you earn £125 you will pay £25 (20%) in tax. If you give the remaining £100 to St John's, under gift aid, then St John's can claim back the £25 you 'gave' to the taxman. Talk to Julian.

I have finished the Guidebook and the Vestry has approved the cost of getting it professionally printed. By the time you read this, copies should be available for sale at £5.00 each. It is hoped that sales to church members will cover the initial outlay, with casual sales to visitors over the years bringing in a little profit – and adding to visitors' appreciation of our beautiful building. The research leading to the writing of the booklet has brought some additional benefits – our Church Record is being updated with corrections and additions and our archives are now well on the way to being fully catalogued and suitably stored. There are the inevitable holes in our archives – if you have old copies of Vestry minutes, newsletters, newspaper cuttings or indeed anything that you think might enhance our historical record then please let me know. Some of our earliest records were deposited with our solicitor many years ago – the Vestry is trying to find if they are still there.

It is an important part of our mission that we keep our church building open during the day. In the winter months, lighting is a problem when it gets dark in the late afternoon. It is too costly to leave all the lights on all the time so as an experiment a lamp on a timer has been installed on the balcony. The Vestry discussed the possibility of installing a security camera at the same time but decided that it would be an unacceptable invasion of the privacy of those who sought solace in St John's.

Our Grand Raffle in November raised over £1000. Christmas and other cards made about £530 last year and the recent auction raised over £2800 (with gift aid). The Carol Service raised £304 for the Moray Inshore Rescue Organisation.

The Vestry had been asked to consider whether or not the annual Carol Service could be held earlier in the day, e.g. 4pm, as some members of the congregation found it difficult to attend in the evening. Unfortunately, many of the volunteers in the choir would still be at work at 4pm and so would not be able to be at St John's at an earlier time.

You must all have heard the bad news by now that, after well over 9 years of service, Sheila Biggs has decided to retire. St John's has been most fortunate in having Sheila as our organist and choir-mistress and she will be sorely missed. Amazingly, our good fortune will continue as Hazel Gray has agreed to take over the job. Hazel is not new to St John's as she has stood in for Sheila in the past – and it is not a total goodbye to Sheila as she has agreed to stand in for Hazel in the future. I'd like to think it is our fine singing that attracts these top quality organists – but I suspect our superb Bevington Organ has something to do with it.

Pride goeth before a fall, they say. Actually, "they" are wrong. According to Proverbs, pride goes before destruction and it is haughtiness that goes before a fall. Nevertheless, I am not wrong when I say pride might go before a fall. None of us are getting any younger, and those chancel steps can be a bit tricky when going to the altar. Some of us may be too proud to admit that we are not as spritely as we were – but don't be. Father Cliff is more than happy to bring communion into the nave for those wise enough not to risk the steps. You can help things run smoothly by either sitting in the front pew or, if you still want to walk up the aisle, slipping into the front pew just to receive

communion. Even though the sides person may be at the chancel steps to offer a helping hand, I have been asked to point out that such assistance is offered at YOUR own risk and neither the sides person or the Vestry can be held responsible if a fall follows your pride. The possibility of erecting a handrail was discussed, but it is unlikely this could be done to Health & Safety standards without damaging the mosaic floor.

Did I mention that the Bishop has pointed out that 2014 will be the 900th Anniversary of the Diocese of Moray and that he has asked for suggestions on how we should mark this event to be passed to ... ME !!?? Hopefully, all that was meant was that I would collect together any ideas and forward them to the Diocesan Secretary. So – how should we celebrate 900 years of the Diocese of Moray ?

As I write, we are still waiting for the Smartwater to be applied to the roof and for the gutters to be cleared of leaves from last autumn – but we hope both jobs will have been finished by the time you read this. Work is also in hand to complete the decoration of the new toilet next to the Parish Room. We have also been under- spending on our gardening budget – there is enough money set aside to be able to pay a gardener to remove all the leaves that accumulate in the autumn in the front of the rectory and around the Parish Room entrance.

Musick Fyne and Moray Concert Brass have both agreed to perform soon at St John's. Keep your eyes open for details. Those of a nervous disposition might like to note that the European Pipe Band Championships are to be held in Grant Park on 29th June. There may be a fund raising opportunity here to put a refreshment tent in church grounds – or to hold a Quiet Garden event somewhere else !

Now for the boring bit – I promised a piece on General Synod – so here goes.

“General Synod” is the title of the organization that forms the central governing body of the Scottish Episcopal Church; it is the Church's Parliament. It deals with all aspects of the church, from doctrine and discipline



to finance, administration and policy. The body has 140 elected members, 70 from the clergy and 70 from the laity. Additionally, the Church's seven bishops and the conveners of the provincial Standing Committee and other boards are automatically Synod members. Whilst Parliament has two Houses (the Lords and the Commons) which meet separately, Synod has three Houses (Bishops, Clergy and Laity), which meet together and vote together – except on matters that affect Canon Law when the three Houses vote separately.

Synod meets just once a year to debate the issues and vote with a simple majority carrying the motion – except when Canon Law is involved. Before a change can be made to Canon Law the motion must first be passed by a simple majority of each of the three Houses, voting separately. The motion is then referred to each Diocese for consultation and comment after which it returns to the next Synod when, to be carried, the motion must be passed by a two-thirds majority of each House, again voting separately.

It is worth noting that a two-thirds majority in the House of Bishops means if just three Bishops vote against the motion, it will not be carried – even if both the other Houses vote unanimously in favour. At first sight this may seem a little undemocratic but then, we are an Episcopal Church (led by Bishops), not a Town Council. In matters affecting Canon Law, Synod deliberates slowly and errs on the side of caution against hasty change.

Clearly, a meeting once a year cannot deal with all of the day-to-day business of running a Province. Synod authorizes boards and committees to carry out Synod's work. At the top of the hierarchy sits the Standing Committee directly representing the General Synod, overseeing the work of the Synod Office and setting the agenda for General Synod meetings. Below the Standing Committee sit the four Boards – Administration, Faith & Order, Information & Communication and Mission & Ministry. Underneath the Boards are various committees that form working groups focusing on specific areas, reporting back to their respective Boards.

The Administration Board deals with general administrative matters through the Investment, Finance, Retirement Welfare, Buildings Advisory and

Personnel Committees. Pension matters are dealt with separately by the Pension Fund Trustees who report directly to the Standing Committee.

The Faith & Order Board deals with Church government and relations with the Anglican Communion and other churches through the Doctrine Committee (interpretation of Church doctrine), the Liturgy Committee, the Inter-Church relations Committee and that Canons Committee.

The Information & Communication Board has the aim of improving the flow of information both within the Church and between Church and society.

The Mission & Ministry Board oversees and promoted mission and training for ministry across the Province and overseas. It has a Ministry Development Committee overseeing the Provincial component of ministerial training and supporting the delivery of training in the Dioceses. The Home Mission Committee is concerned with the development of mission in the SEC and, through the Youth network, supports youth work across the Province. The Church in Society Committee helps the Church in its engagement with the wider world and has a sub-committee handling relations with people of other faiths. The Overseas Committee supports work overseas and promotes awareness of that work within Scotland.

You just didn't realize your "quota dollars" were doing all this, did you ?

Grant Swain

## **Financial Folder**

I'd like to draw your attention to the above which, since the ACM, has been on the table at the back of church. The front Contents Sheet shows clearly what's in it.

The most important document is the latest Five Year Projection, with detailed explanations of how the Income and Expenditure figures are made up; that's at the front. The second folder compares this projection with our budget for the current year (to 30 June 2013) and shows why we are

performing better than the Budget. The valuation used for our investment in the Charifund is based on a price for each unit of £140. This compares with a unit price of £131.4 as at 30 June 2012. This is a very conservative figure, since the present price is way in excess of £150. To have used the figure of £131.4 in the Projection would have been to mislead the congregation as to the real position.

I am aware that many people find financial affairs extremely boring. However, whereas our aim as a church is not to produce a large surplus each year (there's not much chance of a church doing that anyway!), we do need to have prudent financial management. So what's contained in the Folder is important, as we do not want anybody to be able to say, 'Oh! I didn't realise there was a problem.'

The Historical Information should be of interest to most of us – and to appreciate this stuff you don't need any specialist financial skills. There's the story of a remarkable loan, which saved the church from selling investments at a knock down price and, amazingly, brought in a hefty profit. It also lists out the takings from various sectors over the past few years, and gives details of how much we have spent in key areas.

If you would like copies of anything, just let me know. Other than items of a Data Protection nature, we have no secrets. Any questions and I will do my best to explain; perhaps, there are things which could be better expressed. Even Treasurers are not infallible.

Julian

26 February 2013



## **BRITISH SUMMER TIME**

British Summer Time begins at 1.00 am on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March, Easter Day!

Please remember to put your clocks one hour forward.

## READERS ROTA

DATE	READER	OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT	GOSPEL
March 17 Lent 5	George Latham	Isaiah 43.16-21	Philippians 3.4-14	John 12.1-8
March 24 Palm Sunday	Barbara Westie	Isaiah 50.4-9	Philippians 2.5-11	Luke 22.14-23.56 or Luke 23.1-49
March 31 Easter Day	Sheila Biggs	Acts 10.34-43	1 Corinthians 15.19-26	John 20.1-18 or Luke 24.1-12
April 7 Easter 2	Helen Barrett	Acts 5.27-32	Revelation 1.4-8	John 20.19-31
April 14 Easter 3	June Airey	Acts 9.1-20	Revelation 5.11-14	John 21.1-19
April 21 Easter 4	Gisela Bettle	Acts 9.36-43	Revelation 7.9-17	John 10.22-30
April 28 Easter 5	Mary Little	Acts 11.1-18	Revelation 21.1-6	John 13.31-35
May 5 Easter 6	John Horrocks	Acts 16.9-15	Revelation 21.10, 22 – 22.5	John 14.23-29 or John 5.1-9
May 12 Easter 7	Jenny Swain	Acts 16.16-34	Revelation 22.12- 14, 16-17,20-21	John 17.20-26
May 19 Pentecost	Sue Piper	Acts 2.1-21	Romans 8.14-17	John 14.8-17, (25-27)

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

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