



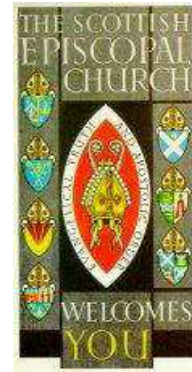
the new look

Issue 51 April 2011

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Queen of Hearts

See WTITY and photos from Mad Hatter's Tea Party!



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Bishop's Easter Message...

I WAS among guests the other night, after a lovely dinner party, discussing the ending of Mark's Gospel (well, the dinner party was in a rectory): *for they were afraid* (Mark 16.8 – the following verses are almost certainly added on).



One of the consequences of this strange ending is that Mark, unlike the other Gospel writers, has no appearances of the risen Jesus, though he maybe hints at one. Really, the sparse eight verses he devotes to the resurrection is a kind of double announcement – he has been raised and he is not here. For Mark, that is the Good News of Easter – he has been raised, he is not here.

Jesus is not there in the tomb, his body is not there as it ought to have been. It is clearly very important that it is not there. But where is it? Well, the answer is clear enough. Remember that it is with some kind of body, visible and tangible, marked with the marks of Good Friday, that Jesus appears in the other Gospel accounts to various people. It is in some kind of body that he is said, later on, to ascend. The clear New Testament witness is therefore this – Jesus, raised from the dead, is not separated from his body. Extraordinary. What on earth could it mean?

The clue is given in a passage from Revelation which used to be the second reading at Matins on Easter Day. In it the risen Jesus says: 'I am the living one. I was dead and, see, I am alive for ever and ever...' The risen Jesus remembers that he was dead. In other words he has not, as it were, left his human experience behind. Rather he has taken it into new vistas. That's what 'body' means for us, the human experience of Jesus. He is never separated from his body, from his humanity.

That means, of course, that he is never separated from us. The Body of Christ, the Body of Christ, the Body of Christ... the priest says to each who receives Holy Communion. Jesus is still not separated from his body.

Just because he is raised from the dead, just because that tomb was empty and could not hold him

imprisoned, Jesus is free to roam where he will, free to be united with his body, with you and me, free to share in our human experience, free to be present among us; free to be with lots of people we would never dream of, free to assure us that one day, the totality of our human experience, of yours and mine, indeed of all people, will be held and yet gloriously transformed in the midst of new and deathless life, so that we will know both who we were and who we are becoming, and live fruitfully and gloriously beyond our wildest imaginings with that knowledge.

+Gregor

From Kenny..



At the time of going to press, we are only in the week of Lent 2, so Easter and the joy of resurrection seems like an eternity away! (Although by the time you read this it may be quite near!!) In fact another magazine is due to be published for Easter Day! (May Magazine)

There is still quite a lot of Lent and Holy Week to fill in before then! This includes our Lent Group which meets on Tuesdays at 7.30pm in the Community Hall. Each week stands alone, so you can come to just one or two and not miss much, however, if you are planning to come I will give you some reading on the Sunday before. (Two or three pages of text). It would be nice to see some new or different faces!

However, the most important thing during the busy weeks ahead is going to be the Parish Day on April 3rd, (Mothering Sunday). As you will see elsewhere, Revd Anne Tomlinson will be with us that day, and I ask you all to stay with us for a soup and sandwich lunch and a wee discussion about the future of the parish and where we are heading. We promise you that all will be said and done by 4pm.

It's an important time for the Diocese as we launch the new Mission Strategy, and we need to be aware that this is going to have an effect on us as a parish. This day will prepare a way for us to see how we get down to business after the Pentecost launch.

The Vestry will be working hard over the next year on new models of mission and growth, and these are going to affect all of us. Come along and have your say!

Kenny

Easter Reflection: 'There was a Garden'

We were standing looking at the snowdrops in the churchyard. It's been a bitter, frozen kind of Winter hasn't it? But now the sun was shining, the temperature had climbed above freezing, and those little bulbs buried in the soil had responded to it. A few weeks ago, all looked dead. But now, all around us, were the signs of Spring.

'Makes you think,' said my companion. 'Death and resurrection - it's simply part of the way things are.' I agreed, and pointed out that in a few days time we'd be celebrating, in the church in the middle of that graveyard, a man who rose from the dead and said, 'Because I live, you will live also'.

This idea, of life blossoming in the place of death is right there in the Gospels, too. 'In the place where Jesus was crucified,' St John tells us, 'there was a garden'. And in that garden was a new tomb, in which, after his crucifixion, he was buried. But within three

days the tomb was once again empty. Like the Easter flowers blooming in the graveyard, life had conquered death.

If you visit Jerusalem, you will find the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on the probable site of the tomb of Jesus, which you can just about find underneath all the pious artefacts. Less than a mile away is the Garden Tomb, which General Gordon thought was the tomb of Jesus, located beside a craggy hill and set in a garden. It was, in fact, inside the city wall in the time of Christ, which means it can't be the actual place of his crucifixion and burial, but there is no doubt that if you want to feel and see what it would have been like, and even peer into a genuine first century tomb, this will probably quicken your pulse more than the Holy Sepulchre.

As Jesus himself said, the seed has to die before it can produce fruit. 'In the place where he was crucified there was a garden'. The seeds and bulbs are buried, and at the right time they burst into life. As my friend said, it's the way things are, and it is the heart of the Easter message.



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EASTER LAUGHTER

Remember our clergyman who started every sermon with a joke? He rarely got the desired effect, no laughter, only a polite smile, maybe a ripple of amusement. The story goes that one young vicar, on an Easter Morning, told jokes to his congregation who sat there stony-faced. After the service the church warden told him: "Vicar, I nearly laughed out loud, but fortunately, just in time I remembered that you were preaching the word of God!"

What a shame! There isn't a more suitable day in the Church calendar to laugh the laughter of 'overcoming the world'. Since the Middle Ages the message of victory over Death was combined with the effort to create hilarity in the congregation. Church humour usually plays with surprises, with contrasts and double meanings.

Earth is set against Heaven, holy matters against trivial ones, pious statements against reality. Often such jokes reveal hypocrisy, and not even St Peter is spared. Like in the story of the scoundrel at the Pearly Gates. He wasn't exactly welcomed. "You haven't got a hope in heaven to get in," said Peter, "all too often you have denied your faith! "But then the scoundrel lifted his neck and crowed as a cock. "Quiet," said Peter, "let that old story be, and come in quickly!"-

In Heaven everything will be different. Thus the contrast between time and eternity, or between the last day and the last but one challenged the imagination of Christians and their humour. There are even some very modern examples of our past-financial-crisis- times, like that which could be entitled: 'Industrial Relations': A manager of steel works died and was sent to Hell. Some time later the Devil rang up St Peter to complain." That chap is causing trouble here," he said. "He has closed down a number of furnaces, made 1000 workers redundant, and now the rest of the workforce have gone on strike. Take him back!" –

Then there is a story about 'Efficiency Savings', when a young man was admitted into heaven and happily dropped into an armchair. "Thank Goodness", he said, nodding off.. But suddenly he was woken by a little devil poking him all over with a little lance. "Wait a minute, there must be a mistake", he cried. But the devil laughed: "Oh, you are old-fashioned, we now operate an integrated system here, a one- stop-shop!"

Those who recognise the contrast between the eternal and the temporal, between grand and small, can laugh at themselves. Especially in churches there has been a tradition of making fun of vicars or any other hierarchical figure, like the Pope. There were

four people in a plane which was about to crash: President Obama, Silvio Berlusconi and Pope Benedict XVI with his secretary. But there were only three parachutes. Obama grabbed the first, since he was President of the mighty USA, Berlusconi claimed the second, because, he said, he was the cleverest politician in the EU, and he jumped out. Then the Pope said to his secretary: "I am an old man, you take the third!" "No need to be generous", said the secretary, we still got two parachutes left. The cleverest politician has just taken my rucksack by mistake!"

Even the Old Testament in Ecclesiastes stated, that there is a time for everything, a time to weep and a time to laugh. Of course, there are times in the life of the Church, when laughter is inappropriate.

There is no joking at the Cross. The texts and hymns of the Passion enrich and deepen our lives. Yet those who mourn deeply at Good Friday can be joyful and cheerful at Easter – even in church, especially there.

Brigitte Williams

(Based on an article by Hinrich C G Westphal in *Andere Zeiten*, 1, 2011.)

Annual Ministry Celebration Service

This takes place on Saturday 4 June at St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow. All Lay Readers and those in Authorised Ministry and their supporters are warmly encouraged by the Bishop to attend.

A light lunch at noon will be followed by the service at 1.15pm. This year's service will have a focus on Lay Readers. All of you are welcome to attend this but especially our Eucharistic Assistants.



Jackie demonstrated the position she had invented for more active prayer times.

Lent Lunches

These take place on Thursdays during Lent until April 14th from 12 to 1 pm at Riverside hall. Lunch of soup, bread and cheese and tea/ coffee are available for a measly £2.

We are responsible for making the soup and serving on April 7th with Dalreoch UF. If you can make soup or help, please see Tim.

Parish Walks

APRIL 16TH

LUSS VILLAGE WALK AND PILGRIMAGE FIELD

MAY 7TH

ABERFOYLE - LOCHAN SPLING

JUNE 11TH

KIPPEN

Growth Plans Gather Pace

PLANS are now well under way for the launch of the Diocesan Growth Strategy, writes Ministry Development Officer ANNE TOMLINSON.

Every Region will be holding a service around Pentecost, using a common liturgy written for the occasion.

To emphasise the diocesan nature of this work, the preacher and president at each service will be the Bishop. The service will also include symbolic actions or symbols appropriate to the local context.

That balance between 'the local' and 'the diocesan' in the Launch Liturgy is symbolic of the Strategy as a whole. For, while it is a coherent set of pathways guiding our corporate life over the next five years, offered and led by the Bishop, that 'framework' will enable each charge to grow according to the nature of the local soil and 'weather conditions'. The fruits growing up the trellis will be different according to context.

Glasgow North West Launch will be held in *All Saints Bearsden 13 June at 7.30pm. I hope as many of you as possible will come to this, so put it in your diary now!*

So what happens after the launch?

All charges will be invited to call a facilitator to come and work alongside them in drawing up their

Mission Action Plan (MAP) for the coming year.

A MAP acts as a 'compass', pointing out the direction in which the charge will work, and a 'magnet', drawing all members to co-operate in shared aims and objectives. MAP facilitators will work with up to two congregations – neither of which would be their own – accompanying them as they produce their Plan and thereafter keeping a watching brief as the charge seeks to implement the actions it has identified. This 'partnership' with the congregation will be reviewed annually, for a maximum of five years.

The Bishop or the Dean will visit every charge once a year to listen to the stories of avenues explored via the MAP, and to share in celebrating those ventures which have worked well and learning from those that have not been successful. Both are important, and the most important aspect of all is the fact that new ventures have been tried.

These stories of growth will also be shared across Regions and Diocese by a variety of other means: through a dedicated website, at regional meetings, at synods and through DNS.

As members of the diocese we will work hard at planting and watering, and will be supporting one another too, but the Strategy is underpinned by an awareness that it is God who makes things grow, and that we are co-workers in God's service (1 Cor 3, 6-9).

So in the lead-up to the launch let us all pray the Growth Strategy prayer: *Spirit of our Loving God, in your mercy and compassion inspire, encourage and empower us to live and work together as a Diocese, to allow your mission for us to take flesh through Jesus Christ our Living and Eternal Lord. Amen.*

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St James the Least of All...

Here the elderly Anglo-Catholic Rector, Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained...

The Rectory

St James-the-Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Thank you for inviting me to speak at your Vestry Meeting yesterday. I began to suspect that my theme of why Eusebius's dislike of Sabellianism led to his condemnation at the Council of Antioch in 324 was a little misjudged, when the only question I was asked after my lecture was if I knew what Eusebius's favourite colour was.

I never realised how much technology was needed these days when people meet to discuss church matters. Your treasurer's power point presentation was most impressive; it was just unfortunate that the electricity cut rendered him speechless and his pie charts invisible. To equip every member with a laptop computer, so that paper is now redundant is probably a good thing, since you seem to have so many briefing documents, diocesan reports and internet downloads to circulate. However, sitting at the back, I could not help noticing that most of your committee spent their time playing computer games, reading e-mails and in one case, looking at material it is better not to describe.

For the secretary to type the minutes as the meeting progressed, so people could collect them on their way out was only marred by paper getting jammed in the printer, so that everyone took home minutes looking as if they had recently held fish and chips.

Our meetings tend to be a little more traditional. Since the church hall floor seems to have been carved out of permafrost, our meetings circulate round members' houses. This introduces a nice element of competition, as each host tries to outdo the previous one in the standard and quantity of cakes.

Meetings at Colonel Drinkwater's – a more inappropriate name one cannot imagine – are the shortest, since we are always promised wine once the meeting is over. It is remarkable how unanimity is achieved on every subject in minutes and nothing appears under "any other business".

Mrs Eddington never sends out minutes – largely because she can rarely decipher the notes she takes – and simply reads out what she can remember at the next meeting. Last month, she accidentally left them at home and brought her shopping list by mistake, so gamely read that out instead. This led to a lively discussion on whether carrots from our local shop were better than those at the supermarket and when it was found out she intended to use them in a venison casserole, endless recipes were keenly debated.

We leave well fed, having caught up on village gossip, untroubled by points of order or sub committee reports. And the lack of any minutes means that I can then make all decisions myself between meetings. I think you will find our system has much to be commended.

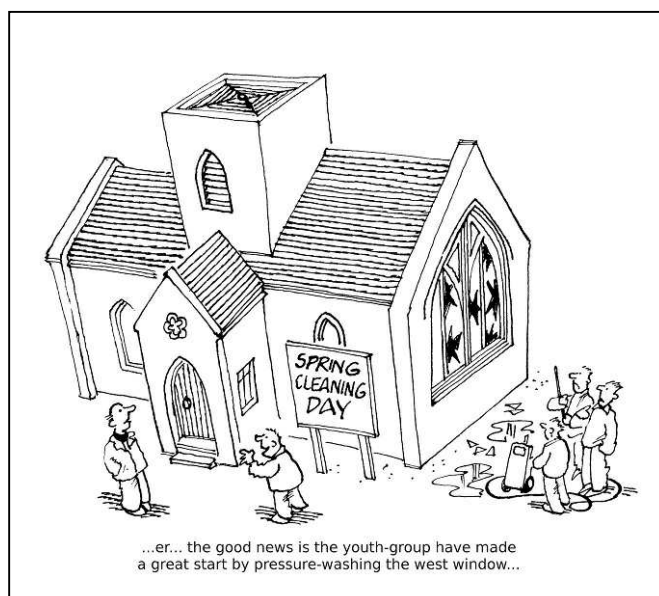
Your loving uncle,

Eustace

A recession is a period in which you tighten up your belt. A depression is a time in which you have no belt to tighten. When you have no trousers to hold up, it's a panic.

Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today, because by that time there will be a tax on it.

Senior civil servant: a person who never even dreamed of earning the salary he can't get along on today.



Rotas for April 2011

Sunday April 3rd

11am Eucharist. Mothering Sunday

Readers: Ghislaine Kennedy & Fran Walker

Intercessions: youth

Chalice: Vernon Perrin & David Rowatt

Sidespersons: Ronnie Blaney & Margaret Swan

Sunday April 10th

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Margaret Hardie & Linda Macaulay

Intercessions. David Rowatt.

Chalice: Maggie Wallace & Tim Rhead.

Sidespersons: Linda Jenkinson & C.Ashman

Sunday April 17th.

11am Eucharist. Palm Sunday.

Epistle: Tim Rhead

Chalice: Fran Walker & Margaret Hardie

Sidespersons: Tim Rhead & David Ansell

Sunday April 24th

11am Eucharist Easter Sunday

Readers: Tim Rhead & Maggie Wallace

Intercessions: Fran Walker

Chalice: Barbara Barnes & Janette Barnes

Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & Vernon Perrin

Rotas

At the moment, we are rather thin on the ground for Sidespersons. This is an important duty, very often the Sidesperson is the first welcomer a visitor meets. I'm sure most of us could do this. Any volunteers welcome. Please speak to Maggie or Kenny.

Colour it Celtic

Ricky, Ghislaine & Co invite you all to the Denny Civic Theatre on Friday 6th May for Colour it Celtic, the Sequel! You all will remember the last concert, I'm sure, but this will be bigger and better and raises money for our Gambian School and Mission Aviation Fellowship. A fiver a ticket!

Vestry Meeting

The April meeting of the Vestry is on Thursday 7th April at 7.30pm in the hall.

Confirmation

The Bishop is coming for a Confirmation on Sunday 29th May at 11am. If you are considering being confirmed, or have not already been confirmed, please see Kenny soon. If we can all put the date in our diaries soon, that would help! The people being confirmed need us all to be there!

Prize Draw for Easter

Our "Christmas" Prize Draw seems to have turned into an "Easter" one, and tickets are now available to sell. You may even find some enclosed with the magazine! We need help with the prizes, too, so anyone who can donate anything should see Barbara Barnes. It is an important part of our annual budget that we bring in around £1000 from this, so please try to sell as many tickets as possible. The Draw will be made on Easter Day after the 11am service.

Only Jesus

(John 19:17, 1:4)

Carrying the cross by himself
He went out.
Sent out,
Yet choosing to go.
Word of life,
Choosing death,
Knowing the end from the beginning,

Carrying the cross by himself
He went out.
The only one who could,
The only way he could,
He went out
To the Skull Place,
For me.

Mad Hatter's Tea Party 2011



Some photos, throughout this month's magazine from the Friends of St Augustine's March Event. March madness seemed to come upon us all, as some of the pictures show, but everyone had a wonderful time!





Smile-Lines

Ears

Why do they have ear piercing 'while you wait'; is there some other shop where you can drop them off and pick them up later?"

Smile

Our local paper runs a popular column called "10 Questions" that spotlights people who live in our community. In addition to the usual inquiries about occupation and age, people are asked questions that give a snapshot of their personalities. Recently one woman was asked, "What's the strangest thing you ever bought?" She answered, "Dog tooth-paste." Next question: "What is the most common thing people say to you?" Her answer: "Where did you get such white teeth?"

Praying for wheels

A boy kept praying for a bicycle, and the priest told him to persevere, as prayer could do anything. Later he saw the boy with a bike, and said that confirmed his belief that prayer could do anything. The boy replied, "I stole the bike and now I'm praying for forgiveness".

Show and Tell

An infant school teacher gave her class a "show and tell" assignment. Each student was instructed to bring in an object to share with the class that represented their religion.

The first student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Benjamin and I am Jewish and this is a Star of David.." The second student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Mary. I'm a Roman Catholic and this is a Rosary." The third student got in up front of the class and said, "My name is Tommy. I am an Episcopalian, and this is a bottle of sherry."

The Twenty and the Five

A well-worn five pound note and a similarly distressed twenty-pound note arrived at the Bank of England to be retired. As they moved along the conveyor belt to be burned, they struck up a conversation. The twenty-pound note reminisced about its travels all over the country. "I've had a pretty good life. I've been to Las Vegas and Monte Carlo, the finest restaurants in Paris, performances on Broadway, and even a cruise to the Caribbean. "

"Wow!" said the five-pound note, "You've really had an exciting life!" "So tell me," says the twenty, "where have you been throughout your lifetime?" The five pound note replies, "Oh, I've been to the Methodist Church , the Baptist Church , and the Anglican Church " The twenty-pound note interrupts, "What's a church?"

Let's face it - English is a crazy language.

There is no egg in plant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France . Sweetmeats are candies while sweet-breads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

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.

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital or ship by truck and send cargo by ship or have noses that run and feet that smell? 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 after it's been switched on. English was invented by people, not computers and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which, of course, is not a race at all. That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible.

My mouth doesn't seem to have a backspace key.

Behind every successful man is a surprised mother-in-law.

"The trouble with quotes on the Internet is that you can never know if they are genuine." - Winston Churchill.

A teenager had a birthday party and it was a highly successful event. She said it was wonderful. Nineteen out of 12 came.

An AA man answered the distress call of a motorist whose car had stopped. He made an examination and informed her she was out of petrol. "Well, will it hurt", she asked, "if I drive it home with the petrol tank empty?"

‘Wait Till I Tell You.....’

Janette looks back on some early Spring events at St. Augs and beyond and looks forward to a pleasant April.

THE SEXAGESIMA SOIREE.

It could only be experienced at St. Augs - the only one of its kind in the entire world! Questions started immediately the poster went up and this gave Friends the opportunity to sell our pre Lent party and convince the curious that it had nothing whatsoever to do with those all-female events that cater for ladies who wish to excite their other halves. The buffet table looked really splendid - canapés, crisps, cup cakes, chocolate cakes, cream cakes, currant cakes - indeed, all manner of goodies beginning with the letter ‘C’. Why ‘C’? Why not? If we’d chosen ‘Z’ we’d all have been embarking on an early Lent! And the drinks echoed a similar alphabetical theme - cocktails, cava, Costa juice (sangria) cool snowballs and a few others as challenging as the sausage rolls that are a must on every St Auggie’s buffet table.

To be truthful, February is a difficult month for events - OK there’s St. Valentine’s Day but our clientele have mostly outgrown those youthful thrills of hearts, roses and unsigned cards. And the Sunday we had chosen was Sexagesima - a difficult word when texting so not used much in today’s world. But I remember St. Augustine’s Sunday School in the 1940s where we didn’t build putty mountains, create exciting posters or party with soldiers. Oh no! We sat in orderly rows on hard benches in a big cold hall with our hats on. We were given a stamp each Sunday illustrating the date in the liturgical calendar and if we missed a Sunday we missed the stamp. That was where we learned about Sexagesima preceded by Septuagesima and followed by Quinquagesima making us Latin scholars at the tender age of eight.

So on 27th February Friends brought out the old name for the second Sunday before Lent - and what a lively affair it was with Candlelit Bingo, Call My Bluff, a Clever Clogs Cwiz, and Connie’s Card Contest. A great wee soiree with lots of laughs helped along by the sparkling cocktails!

LET THEM EAT CAKE!

Yes, the famous Marie Antoinette phrase would certainly have applied at Cheryl’s Big Coffee Morning on 19th March. All the scones had been scoffed by 11am and not a seat remained for those who were still trying to gain entrance. So it was Cakes-R- Us all round and what delicious varieties were on offer - cup cakes, cream cakes, chocolate cakes and my favourite - a scrumptious sticky peanut concoction.

Cheryl, with a little help from her Friends plus Georgie, Barbara and her Team, enjoyed a stressful but successful Saturday fundraising for Ovarian Cancer Awareness in memory of her Mum, May. Over £650 was raised - well done to all those involved.

THE MAD HATTER’S TEA PARTY.

On Sunday 20th March Friends went on a trip to Wonderland for a real Mad Hatter’s Tea Party. It’s easy to be mad at St. Augs - you get so much encouragement! And everyone entered into the spirit of make believe and nonsense. Wonderland was the best place to be on another Sunday when Rangers and Celtic supporters were indulging in their own brand of madness.

The Mad Hatter was Fran impeccably dressed from her huge top hat to her zany boots. She got right into character insisting that she won all the games, was unquestionably the best dressed and that everyone else must settle for second place. Maggie was encased in fur as a dear little Dormouse, meek, forgetful and of few words. The part was a challenge to her.

But how I enjoyed being the Mad March Hare with plenty of scope for over acting and looking absolutely ridiculous. Then there was Linda as Alice, our heroine, in the ubiquitous blue gingham frock with the fit for all elasticised waist. Alice stuck stoically to her script and endeared herself to our audience of over forty on a Sunday afternoon.

After a delicious tea of traditional party food, the nonsense continued with the judging of the costumes. There was an excellent Tweedledum and Tweedledumber - Irene and Josephine - whose secret padding consisted of incontinence pads and hula hoops! And there were two lovely young Alices - Megan and Abby Scott - who shared best dressed with the Tweedles.

The Alices were awarded the chocolate prize since the Tweedles were considered to be fat enough already! The prize for the second best hat was won by Brogan Dyer who wore a magnificent creation of colour and gauze festooned with a giant butterfly. Indeed, you won’t see such an elegant hat again even at a Royal Wedding!

Spare a thought for Margaret Swan who chose a lovely Queen of Hearts dress and had to spend all day in the kitchen filling up Roberta’s bizarre collection of daft teapots!

The Mad March Hare Treasure Hunt was held in the Church and the intellectual clues were eagerly scanned by the teams of contestants. Three teams came first equal so the winner had to be drawn by raffle ticket and Barbara's team proved they were lucky as well as brainy. Well done to all who participated and special mention to Anne Dyer who guessed that the red herring clue referred to the Church toilet and not to the Bishop's Throne!

Soon it was back to the Hall for the Mad Hat Game at which everyone got the chance to look ridiculous! Then a loud knock heralded the arrival of the Queen of Hearts, this time Roberta, her Tart played by TBag O'Neill and trusty guard, Chrissie. This mad group, aptly named the 'Party Peeces' joined the Hare for a Poetry Reading.

See St. Augs! See Culture!

The elocutionists had to perform elevated on two stationery boxes to reach the Church lectern! It was a spirited performance with more than a few dodgy words but enjoyed by all. All too soon, people began to become sensible again. The raffles were drawn and it was time for Margaret Hardie to leave the Wonderland kitchen - her man was waiting for his tea!

WHO REMEMBERS HATTER'S CLOSE?

Well, it was in Dumbarton High Street just across from the Bellsmyre Bus Stop! And a Hat Shop actually existed there in those halcyon days before folks started shuffling along this depleted thoroughfare in anoraks with built in hoods!

OF COURSE THERE'S 'HATTER'S CASTLE'.

The famous novel by A.J.Cronin set in a town called Levenford but everyone knows is actually Dumbarton in 1879. The Hatter in this tale is not a very nice man but it's a great story. Strange to think it could now be downloaded on all those Kindles. Go for it, Maggie!

MAKING SENSE OF THE CENSUS.

It was all going well up until Question 17 - 'How well do you speak English?' Does this mean speaking it with a posh voice and no 'seening' and 'done-ing' or referring to your pals with the plural 'you'se'? Is it talking in RP (received pronunciation) rather than a West of Scotland accent?

Does it refer to one's fluency in an argument or one's use of big words to impress? The answers will be interesting. What do I have to sound like to tick the box marked 'Very Well?'

AND TALKING OF TALKING.

Next year, according to reports in the press, we'll be able to buy a talking car. Yes, and it will talk sense and be able to master 10,000 commands - more than a lot of folk in Dumbarton! Amazing! If you want to buy such a car the system that is installed is called Sync and it will tell you where the nearest petrol station is or even the location of the nearest toilets. But will it manage 'this morning you're on the Tea Rota so I'm taking you to St. Augs'? And how will it cope with TBag O'Neill and Maggie arguing in the back seat? Perhaps it's vocabulary will include 'Shut Up'.

SUMMER ESSENTIALS

With the newspapers full of bad news just now it was easy to miss this foreboding little paragraph. This summer we shall have 800 times more midges! Apparently our snowy December not only left a legacy of nasty potholes, but provided excellent breeding conditions for the scourge of Scotland in summertime. It goes on to say 'we shall have to prepare to be bombarded' and 'they will be up and running early'. Yes, it's serious. Demand a no fly zone and don't forget to stockpile those nets, hats, electric devices and tubes of anti-midge cream. Full body suits may even be necessary for those who live near water or in houses like our Rectory with overhanging trees. You have been warned!

COLOUR IT CELTIC

To any inhabitants of neighbouring planets who have not yet been approached by Ghislaine to purchase a ticket for her Civic Theatre Concert on 6th May - don't miss a great night out!. Her posters will shortly be rivalled by the election posters so make sure you read Ghislaine's today. Go on it's only a fiver!

LOOKING FORWARD TO....

Easter eggs, Spring sunshine and getting the wellies off! Back next month...

Janette

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DUMBARTON CHURCHES TOGETHER SPRING FESTIVAL DATES

- 13th May *Salvation Army Band
Concert in Riverside.*
- 21st May *Ceilidh in St. Patrick's Church Hall.
Tickets available soon
from Janette or Tim.*
- 22nd May *Spring Praise Evening
at St. Augustine's.*
- 21st June *Concert by Jessica Weidman
in St. Augustine's.*

PLEASE SUPPORT THESE EVENTS.

Rectory Party

We know it's probably not the done thing to do during Lent, but we are having a Parish Party in The Rectory on Saturday 9th April. Linda and Kenny sometimes entertain foreign students on the HOST programme, young people who are studying in our country and far from home who want a taste of Scottish life and scenery!

They have a young American coming during this weekend and he so desperately wants to meet folk. So, can you come to the Ceilidh? It would be great to have a wee crowd in The Rectory!

Bring your own poison and be entertain or even just entertain? All are welcome!

Parish Day

Anne Tomlinson is going to be with us on Sunday 3rd April for our latest Parish Day. It is going to be an important day for us and your attendance is really necessary if it's going to be successful.

Some of you may remember a big fall-out last year when we were discussing where we were going in the Parish during a Lent Group! We fell out because it was important stuff and it mattered to us!

Where are we going? Why have numbers fallen a little of late? What can be done better? What new stuff do we need to contemplate, and what needs to be revisited?

Anne always brings a fresh approach and an entertaining one, and we are lucky to bag her for a Lenten Sunday!

If you do nothing else in your Lenten discipline, then please do this.



Stay on after the service, have a soup and sandwich lunch, and help us to plan for the future!

We will be finished by 4pm. Promise!



"It's the only way we can cope with all the couples who want to get married on the same day as William and Kate."

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Bishop's Lent Appeal 2011

Mercy Ships in The Gambia

I've been vaguely aware of the work of the Mercy Ships for some time, I even knew that the first time Faye saw an ophthalmologist about his eyes, it was a specialist from a Mercy Ship that was able to give him his first pair of specs.

But until about a fortnight ago I didn't fully comprehend the impact that the visit of a Mercy Ship can have. I was watching the news in the Gambia when there was an appeal for babies and young people with hare lips and cleft pallets to come forward. A Mercy ship surgeon would be spending 4 weeks in the main hospital operating on those affected. Photos were shown of some of the babies who have such difficulty breast feeding because of their deformities (in a country where clean water for bottle feeding is not easy). Movingly a teenage girl, whose upper teeth were growing horizontally rather than vertically, spoke of her dream of having a normal mouth so that she didn't get ostracised any more. The surgeon was asked about the cause of the 'disease' and he took time to reassure people that it wasn't the work of the devil and the children affected are not witches.

When I asked Faye about his thoughts about the work of the Mercy Ships, he replied "They treat ailments that are most often seen as incurable, especially by the very poor for whom treatment is too expensive. What they do is priceless."

Fran

(I, too, have seen the incredible work that Mercy Ships have done in The Gambia, but they operate all over Africa, mostly in West Africa. They will not go into nations, Nigeria eg, where there is enormous wealth living together with abject poverty, taking the stance that these nations need to sort out their own economics and health-care plans. This means that it is only the poorest of the poor who benefit most. Please give generously, and remember to bring your Lent Box back at Easter! - Ed)

In Memory of George Matheson...

A portable extension to our little side chapel has been built for us by Shaun Hoey, and will be blessed at our main service on April 10th. We felt it was a fitting way to remember George.

The chapel, where we keep the Reserved Sacrament, is well used when our doors are open, but it has always been rather cramped, and too small to use even for our midweek services.

Many people just call it the "Prayer Corner" and will sit for a long time there in silence, or will light a candle for someone. It is fitting, then, that it's had a revamp, and a rather beautiful one at that!

Holy Week 2011

At the time of going to press it is unclear whether or not Holy Week Services will again be shared around the different churches. We need to keep our eyes on the Weekly Sheet or the website for any changes to what has been listed below. All services in St Augustine's, 18th-23rd April.

Holy Monday: 7.30pm Eucharist & Address

Holy Tuesday: 7.30pm Eucharist & Address

Holy Wednesday: 10.30am Eucharist
7.30pm Eucharist & Address

Maundy Thursday: 7pm Passover Supper,
Eucharist of the Last Supper,
Stripping of the Altar & Watch
until Midnight.

Good Friday: 2pm The Last Hour
7.30pm Service & Address

Holy Saturday: 9pm Easter Ceremonies
(We begin the service in the hall)

Cleaning for Easter

The church needs a good clean before we decorate it all for Easter Day. All hands on deck on Saturday 23rd April from 10am. Bring along your dusters and mops, the brasso and silver cleaner and let's get everything looking wonderful for Easter!

Gowns and Crowns
Dressmaking and Alterations service

86 - 88 High Street

Dumbarton

(above Kitchens, Bathrooms,
Doors and Floors)

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WHY WE SHOULD THANK OUR TROOPS...

Quite a paradox, you might think; someone who marched, along with her whole family, against the war in Iraq, wanting to show support for our troops in Afghanistan. Not just that, but encouraging the Sunday School to say thank you to these service men and women on Remembrance Sunday, by creating a collage, which now hangs in pride of place in the Veteran's Hall in Alexandria.

I do not think the two positions are mutually exclusive. Both feel right. To say, "Not in my name" to an illegal war is as valid as expressing appreciation to our troops for the highly dangerous job they do. The latter is a thankless task, carrying out orders in a military arena, when the politics are open to argument, and the loss of life constant. Some do it for their country; some, as I heard one soldier explain, do it purely for the mates fighting

beside them. Many feel that their contribution is taken for granted, and that ordinary soldiers are forgotten. A thank you is appropriate.

A light came on in my head when I realized that the job done by our own Derek Barnes, sergeant in the RAMC, was the same job as my dad's in the First World War. (He married late.) We have visited the battlefields near Ypres, and seen the wooden carts they used to transport the dead and injured through horrific mud. My half-sister has told me how my dad's personality completely changed after he returned home from Belgium. Little wonder.

The troops today are fighting in equally challenging conditions, but we often choose not to think about it. To remember their bravery and their sacrifices is a good thing. That is why we were glad to say thank you to them, when we were made so welcome on our recent visit to the Veterans' Hall.

Margot Rhead



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