

By the Way Together

The Magazine of:
St Augustine's Scottish Episcopal Church, Dumbarton
and
St Mungo's Scottish Episcopal Church, Alexandria

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NEW WINTER FASHIONS JUST IN!

Read more on page 2

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A SUCCESSFUL OCTOBER!

It was all smiles when five would-be chefs 'graduated' from the Leamy Garden Project 'School of Cooking'!

After attending faithfully the weekly cooking classes the class were rewarded with certificates for their efforts. Well done, everyone!



This month the Garden Project was visited by Gail Robertson the SNP Councillor for Ward 2 Leven. She was interested in the ways the project was engaging people and answering the very real needs of those in the area.

She was very impressed by what had been achieved already and pledged her support for the project.

New outreach contacts have been made during October. The Garden Project has been working with the Tulloch Trust (which is an Employability Project delivering Tulloch Futures targets) sharing their social gardening activities and enabling the transference of personal, planning and gardening skills. Also the Project has begun a six month working alliance with DACA (Dumbarton Area Council on Alcohol) and is planning many joint activities to happen during the next few months.

Other news include the receiving of positive support from West Dunbartonshire Community Gardens Forum and looking forward to a joint Community Event; the setting up of compost bins behind St Mungo's Hall and the recycling of large amounts of garden waste from the Rectory garden. It's a hectic time!



Nautical Knitting: In this part of the world we fully appreciate the 'woolly hat'! It keeps us warm, the wind out our ears and of course are an essential fashion accessory at this time of year. For those from further afield in lands that see the sun more the thought of a woolly hat is not a common one. So why talk of the humble woolly hat? A few years back I had the privilege of going onto the ship in Aberdeen Harbour on Christmas Day and handing out woolly hats and other treats to the seamen and women on the ships. These sea farers are often from warmer lands and when they receive their wee hat that has been knitted with love by some person they

have never met it not only warms their heads but also their souls. I had great conversation with the folks I met on the different ships and for them this small token of kindness meant so much when they were so far from home. Small acts of kindness can create ripples that echo into eternity, so maybe the woolly hat after all is not so humble!

Bex Collins

WOOLLY HAT SUNDAY: 22nd NOVEMBER



St Augustine's Annual Report of the Rector – October 2015

General: Less than a week after my fourteenth anniversary of being licensed as Priest-in-Charge, and nine years as your Rector, I come yet again to write an Annual Report for the AGM. It's a time to reflect on all that has gone on over the past year, and point to highlights, or things we could have done better. Whenever I get around to doing this every year, I give thanks to God that I'm in charge of a healthy, outward-looking parish which is not averse to taking risks for the sake of the Gospel, and is highly regarded in the community as a church which cares about what happens in the town, and indeed serves the town well. We do have that sort of reputation, as a parish which reaches out to all, and as a church where everyone is welcome. The fact is that I am rather proud to be your Rector, and although I may have a little niggler at you from time to time, I will defend you as the best Episcopalian parish in the West of Scotland to anyone who may dare to be critical of the sort of ministry that has developed here over the years. It is strong, it is brave, and it is costly, not least in the time we spend in ministry as individuals and as a group, but costly, too, financially.

The last year didn't start off well for me, having to take some time off due to the pressure of running two parishes and the demands that were being made on me at that time, and the year has not ended well for me as I prepare to go to bury my sister 48 hours after writing this actual Report! You, however, have been extremely supportive, throughout, as a congregation and your love and prayers have carried me through.

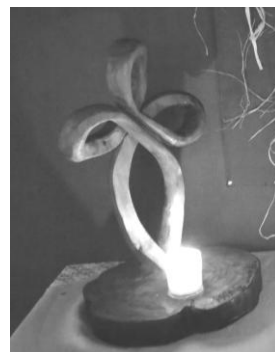
Changes: The arrival last October of Revd Liz O'Ryan as the Associate Priest of the Linked Charge has been an inspired appointment, and although she is only contracted to work half time, she puts in a full week's work most weeks, and for that I am extremely grateful. Liz has taken so much pressure from me, and her wonderful smile and cheery disposition would be an asset to any parish.

Other changes have included the fact that Circle (Scotland), having had their funding taken from them, have closed down the FABI Project, and no longer have a person in place sharing the parish office. This has caused a hole in our hall income. Caroline Marsland was made redundant, but that has had a profound effect on how our own outreach has blossomed and flourished over the past few months.

West Dunbartonshire Foodshare has also left St Augustine's and their outlet on Fridays is now situated in the Concord Centre. It was felt that this made things easier, as our own Food for Thought Programme, and Foodshare, were being mixed up in the minds of the public, and there are now clear divisions between what each of us do.

The Rock Community no longer worship in our building on a monthly basis on Sunday evenings, and that was a link I was sorry to see broken. The Parish Office has certainly had a makeover, and although it is far too tidy for me, there has been a marked improvement in the way things operate and are organised. (In saying this, the photocopier has just broken down in the midst of AGM weekend, but that is an unusual occurrence!)

Other changes include the fact that we are now training a whole new Pastoral Team to replace Tim Rhead who unfortunately left us for Milngavie this year. Enter Mhairi Gordon, Linda Jenkinson, Fran Walker, and Linda Macaulay, who are being trained as visitors, and are being trained in how to do Home Communion. Linda will also help us cover St Mungo's congregation. I am also looking to take on at least two new Worship Leaders who could take Services with the Reserved Sacrament when a priest is not available. All of these people are being trained by Liz and me, but will have to attend occasional



Diocesan Training Events too. I thank them for their commitment and the superb support they provide.

Sculptor John has given us the superb "Eternal Cross" for the wee side altar, and it is just beautiful.

Mission Action Plan: We are almost on to our fourth year of Mission Action Planning. It has been a long journey, and it's interesting to see how things have developed over the years. Things have just popped up like Food for Thought and the Girls' Group which is going through regeneration at the moment, but other wonderful things have happened too, to make us even more outward looking, yet concerned with our own Christian development in study and prayer. We still do the Remembrance Service for those who have died as the result of addiction, and this is now attracting over 100 people. The Bishop is extremely happy with the way things have gone, and is due to come to discuss this with us in February of next year.

Community Hall: Our Hall ministry has developed quite substantially, and most of the Groups who now use it are supporting people in recovery, people on the margins of our community, or people with light mental health difficulties. Most of this ties in with our Food for Thought Programme, and there is some real joined-up thinking and cooperation going on between us all. How Maggie, Caroline and Barbara keep tabs on who is using which rooms when and how much they get charged is well beyond me, but they perform that miracle on a weekly basis.

Those who use our Community Hall are becoming more and more a part of the St Augustine's family and that is pleasing to see. Hall users come to our parties and events, sometimes to worship, and work with us in things like the Community Fair. It is establishing this wider St Augustine's Family that I am interested in, and I want to develop that "Family" atmosphere, and feeling of belonging. The worshipping Community, and the powerhouse of prayer which it supplies, is essential to our success, but the worshipping community is but one part of the St Augustine's Family. I hope you "buy in" to that vision.

The Hall is also used by Dumbarton URC on a Sunday morning, and it is wonderful when they occasionally join us for worship in church. Their future is uncertain, but they enjoy worshipping on our premises for now. If you stick around the Community Hall, you will eventually meet everyone who lives in Dumbarton and The Vale!

Sundries: Our church building is being used more often for community events, like the monthly Acoustic Nights and the recent presentation of "Palestine Unsilenced". There is also an inter-faith Meditation Group meeting weekly, and there are forever concerts of one sort or another taking place, raising money for our parish or some other needy cause! I struggle to keep up!

Numbers: The Parish Returns are not due until Advent, and it's therefore difficult to give you definite numbers at this time. There had certainly been a dip in the numbers attending services at the beginning of the year, and this was causing me great concern. It was not so much that people had stopped coming, but that people had stopped coming on a regular basis. As members, we should have a good excuse for non-attendance, for it is easy to get out of the habit of coming every Sunday. However, as the year has gone on, new faces have begun to appear, and that is encouraging. We have some new Christians, who need to be taught much, and some old hands who have chosen to worship with us. They are all very welcome, and it is everyone's responsibility to welcome them, help them get involved, and support and keep them as part of our worshipping community. We have the Bishop coming for a Confirmation on January 10th, and some will be confirmed and some welcomed from the Roman Catholic tradition.

Giving: We always need to look at what we give to the church, and compare it with what we spend on other things in our lives. Energy Bills and everything else, are rising in cost for the parish as well as for you, and therefore our giving should increase annually. If you pay tax at all to the Inland Revenue, can I beg you again to sign a Gift Aid form? It means we get about 25% more on every penny you give us, at no inconvenience to yourself. If you link that, too, with taking envelopes, so that your collection gets put away even on Sundays that you are not here, then the increase to our income will be surprisingly significant. Direct giving still needs to increase, even in this time of austerity, maybe even because of this time of austerity. We are holding a Stewardship Day soon, and I hope that you will make an effort to come to this. We will be sending out personal invitations.

Study Groups and Prayer Groups: Can I record my thanks to Kirsten and John for beginning a new House Group, and this has complemented the joint Lent and Advent Groups that have been held with St Mungo's. We did manage a weekend away last October, as a Parish, and we may plan for another at some point in the future.

Friends and MAD: Without Friends' we might simply be an ordinary wee parish, and I cannot begin to thank the Executive for all the work they do to keep this going. They are at the forefront of our welcome, our mission, and our fundraising, and give people heaps of fun in the process. We often take the work they do for granted, but they are central to our parish life. Long may the imagination of Janette Barnes thrive!

Friday Lunches/ Saturday Coffee: The faithful band of people who sustain these fundraising events are to be commended for their continued commitment, not only for raising money to keep us afloat, but for keeping our profile high in the Town Centre, and using these fundraisers as a vehicle for our mission and outreach. We need to freshen up our helpers a little, and new volunteers are always welcome. I would like us to actively think about this in the coming months. Perhaps you can become involved, or suggest ways we could do things differently? The burden seems always to fall on the few.

Ecumenism: The Minister's Fraternal in the town has been meeting again, now there is some stability in clergy in the town. Joint Services at Dumbarton Castle have been worth doing. Dumbarton Churches Together goes from strength to strength, and although we are represented, we could do with another couple of people who might wish to get involved. Again the various churches collected for Christian Aid together, had the Good Friday Walk of Witness together, came together for the Spring Festival, and participated together in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Our special Maundy Thursday Ceremonies were well attended again, and sometimes we just manage to feed everyone by the skin of our teeth. The Allsorts Choir, too, continues to bring Christians of all traditions together.

Sunday School: We are having a re-think about what do with this now that the child population on a Sunday has changed again and for the better. Sandra O'Neill is taking a lead at the moment, but she is going to need heaps of support.

Fabric: Thanks to all who make sure the jobs are done and the buildings maintained. Fran and Margaret Hardie keep things chuntering along, and will give a more detailed report elsewhere.

Parish Website: The Website had a massive makeover this year, and my thanks go to Morag who keeps the events page as current as possible, and Liz, who in her spare moments helps with updating things. You can download past magazines from the website. It is an important part of our witness and outreach in the modern world, and the site attracts lots of traffic. Most folk, when choosing a church to go to, will first of all turn to the internet before deciding to visit!

Music: Musically, we do well, and are about to purchase new Hymn Books to save us printing so much on a Sunday. My thanks go to the committed musicians who turn up every week and make a joyful noise. We now have two Johns and a Ruth added to our number, with the odd little fingers giving Morag a hand on the keyboard from time to time.

Food for Thought: We have been involved in feeding and supporting families and their children and individuals for a long time now, but with the current austerity programme the need for this has rocketed, and we have just grown bigger and bigger. Since my last report, we must have been involved with close on one thousand individuals, many of them children, feeding, helping into tenancies, meeting medical and emotional need, spiritual need, and so much more. When Caroline Marsland was made redundant, the Bishop moved heaven and earth to give us money to employ her as Project Coordinator until March 2016. Her work is phenomenal, and without her input, that bridge between the hall and the worshipping community would be far less effective. It is my hope and prayer that now the Project is a Registered Charity in its own right, funding will be forthcoming from April to continue the level of work and commitment we

offer. Thank you for supporting this initiative in the way you do, and continue to support us in your prayer, in your time and in your giving.

Thanks: There are so many people to thank that I would surely miss people out if I began to single out individuals. However, I need to say a special “Thank You” to our Trustees, Barbara Barnes and Margaret Wallace, for their tremendous support and hard graft, and a “Thank You” to Tim Rhead for his work as a “Pastoral Assistant” which, of course came to an end in 2015. A big “Thank You”, too, to Georgie Duncan who keeps the Sacristy going, and whose work is, on the most part, unseen. The time has come for Georgie to step back a bit, and Irene Telford has been a great support along with Alison Miller, but I’m looking for new volunteers to help with the Sacristy!

The Last Bit: Without Liz, I would never have coped with a year which has been extremely stressful and demanding, yet at the same time exciting and a joy to be part of. The Parish Office is like a “Living Well” which I drink from often, and a laugh or a good “greet” are tremendously

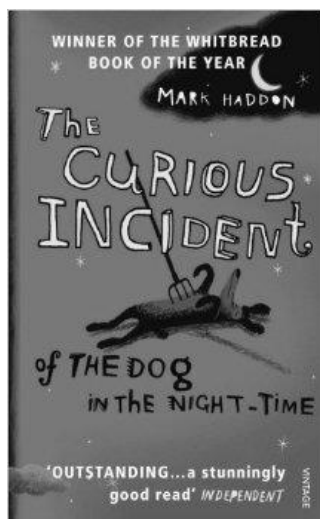


therapeutic. I did enjoy my 60th Birthday celebration which you all put on for me, and it was a wee reminder that I no longer have the energy of a 21 year-old!

We are held in high regard in Diocesan circles, and our

work is truly incarnational and of the Gospel, however frustrating that may often be. Together we take Jesus to people, and bring people to Jesus, and that is a sign of a living parish. I thank God I am part of it all.

Kenneth Macaulay



The Curious Incident of The Dog in the Night-time

by Mark Haddon

This is a murder mystery novel like no other.

The detective, and narrator, is Christopher Boone. He is 15 and has Asperger’s Syndrome, a form of autism. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings. He loves lists, patterns and the truth and owns a pet rat called Toby. He hates the colours yellow and brown and hates being touched. He knows it’s going to be a good day if he passes red cars on his way to school on the bus. He has never gone further than the end of the road on his own. When the dog across the street is stabbed and dies, Christopher decides to solve the mystery and write a book about it. His favourite novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, becomes his model as he investigates the crime, uncovering many secrets involving his own family in the process.

This book club felt that this story gives a clear insight into the problems faced by someone with Asperger’s and also by their family. Christopher struggles to understand the world and how to deal with situations that others would take for granted, but both his parents struggle to understand Christopher’s world and how best to help him. It was an interesting and thought-provoking read.

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Next time.....The book club looks at “The Little Old Lady Who Broke All The Rules” by Catharina Ingelman-Sundberg.

Morag O’Neill



On Monday the 26th October I travelled with my clergy colleagues to the beautiful island of Cumbrae to stay for four days on retreat at the Cathedral. In silence. Yep, in complete silence.

Yipes! I can hear you say! Four days without saying anything? Anything at all? You must be mad!

Well, mad I might be. But actually I have always looked forward to such times and regard them as somewhat of a personal luxury! You see, I feel there is a great freedom in being in silence. Because when we are not allowed to speak we are instantly freed from the constraints of usual social living. There is no need to make polite or forced conversation. No pressure for witty rejoinders. No need to think of something deep and meaningful to say in seminars. I only have to listen. It's wonderful! (Don't tell me it's only introverts like me who finds this utterly freeing!)

Now you might think that living in silence would make you self absorbed and self conscious – having only your own thoughts to contend with minute by minute. But in fact I find the exact opposite to be true. Being in silence heightens the awareness of 'the other'. During the four days of the retreat being in silence meant that I could not rely on verbal cues to notice the needs of my neighbour – I constantly had to be on the alert in order to answer their needs without being told. This was particularly true at mealtimes where I had to *notice* when someone needed the salt or the salad bowl passing, or a wine glass filled up (yes, wine was still thankfully allowed- even in silence!).

When venturing beyond the Cathedral grounds the pervading and ever deepening silence sharpened my senses and made the world appear anew. The sound of leaves blowing across a pavement, the high-pitched mew of the fledgling seagull, the glub-glub sound of the water against the seawall – all these were louder and clearer than ever before. The sights were brighter... the sun warmer... and the wind fresher. Snippets of overheard conversation brought a smile to my face.... a lively Cairn Terrier wagged its way to me in a burst of enthusiastic friendship. The roar of car engines and the music from the Crazy Golf was brash and uninviting. The silence within affects the

perception of the world without. With silence every day is a sensory feast.

And what was the point of all this silence, you may ask? Well, as the word 'retreat' suggests – it was a time for taking a break – a REAL break – not like a holiday where I always try to cram in as many new sights and activities as possible in a short time. A retreat is a time where I give myself permission to do nothing... well, nearly nothing. The day was punctuated by four prayer times... and two daily talks led by the retreat leader (this year Fr Andrew Bain from Edinburgh speaking on Benedictine Spirituality). But that still left many hours every day just to BE.... to be with myself and to be *with God*, consciously, intentionally and deliberately.

We are usually such busy people. Our diaries are crammed. Our lives are full. And that is no bad thing... except when it squeezes out our awareness of the presence of God and the outpouring of his love on us every day and every hour. My retreat is like my annual MOT where I can stop and think and re-connect, recalibrate and re-balance my life with God. The talks help. The silence is crucial. The stopping is vital.

Our man-made world is naturally so loud and full of noise... but our God speaks quietly with the 'still small voice of calm'. Our lives are full of rushing and hurry.... yet my soul yearns for rest in the divine stream of love. God longs for me to stop, to listen, to turn to Him.... and when, in retreat I do, I am not disappointed – for when I take but one step towards Him, as always He takes a hundred steps towards me. It is for this I go on retreat.

Coming back from retreat is sometimes hard. Having deliberately set to one side for four days the things that usually fill my day and weekends, I now have to pick them all up again and start off afresh. Only.... only.... things are slightly different.... because I am slightly different. As with every retreat I have ever been on, talking or silent, the time away has changed me... changed the way I look at things.... changed my relationship with God. The changes are small, I grant you, but, for me, they are more steps along with my God.

Would I go again? You betcha! Silence is a gift into which God speaks and within which He is found. I suspect we could all do with a bit more silence in our lives running up to Christmas!

With love, Liz



ANYONE FOR CHOCOLATE BEETROOT BROWNIES?

**What do you get if you cross
a gaggle of enthusiastic Girl
Guides with a bumper crop
of beetroot?**

*Chocolate Beetroot Brownies,
of course!*



This was precisely the scenario in which Girl Guide Leader Ruth Gallacher found herself: her Guides had planted beetroot months ago and now had harvested a wonderful bumper crop. What to do with all this purple vegetable? This situation led to a fun filled evening making the brownies which not only tasted delicious but were taken home to be sampled by grandmas, siblings and friends. Even the St Mungo's congregation were offered samples on Sunday morning. Which other church would you go to where you received not only the sacrament but beetroot delicacies! Well done, Guides, and thank you!



**It's wonderful to
welcome the
children into
church and
Sunday School
and be able to
share worship
together!**



Welcome into our family,
Benn and Erin Brooks!



Oor Toon, Oor Times!

Happy 90th, Bessie!



Thursday
lunchtimes!
All are
welcome to
the weekly
feast!



Christian Aid Annual Inter-Church Quiz

Friday, November 13th at 7.30pm

St Patrick's Hall

Tea and Coffee will be supplied

Cost; £2 per person... 4 people to a team

Please contact Christian Aid Rep with any teams



Room at the inn?

Charity HOST is seeking friendly people who could volunteer to offer an invitation to adult international students for a day, weekend, or four days at Christmas.

Learn about other cultures, welcome a guest far from home, and make the world a little friendlier! To be put in touch with your local organiser, visit www.hostuk.org or call 020 7739 6292.

ADVENT GROUP

Every Wednesday
starting
Wednesday 11th November
7.30pm
The Rectory,
Queen Street, Alexandria

looking at
SOUL KEEPING
by John Ortberg
*Caring for the Most
Important Part of You*

All welcome! Books provided.



Raising Funds For Lomond
Foodbank

Saturday 14th November

11am – 2pm

St Mungo's Church Hall

OUT OF AFRICA

Saturday 28th November
6pm

3 Course African Meal
with African drumming, dancing
and African items on sale
£8/£7 (Friends discount)

St Augustine's Hall

Dumbarton Acoustic Music (DAM)

Saturday 21st November
*An Evening of Music and
Food*

featuring AGM and local musicians

6pm – 8.30pm

Burgers/hot dogs

BYOB

£5 entrance



What an Experience!

I was feeling quite nervous on the first day, as I began my week's work experience with Food For Thought and St Augustine's. After the first five minutes, however, my nerves had gone. The St Augustine's welcome was fab!

Over the week I visited companies and charities who help people in need. I went to Alternatives, the FAST group, spoke to a lady from Women's Aid, and Pro-Life. I learned also how the foodbank works and helped to pack bags, give out food and fill in the necessary books.

Overall the week was very eye-opening! It has made me realise that when we help people in what we think are little ways, the effect can be huge. Our little things are often BIG things to those whom we help. I was so impressed by the work done by Alternatives – I loved the art work and things that were being made by the people who are part of the organisation.

Everybody was really friendly! The banter was total class! And so were my cups of tea!

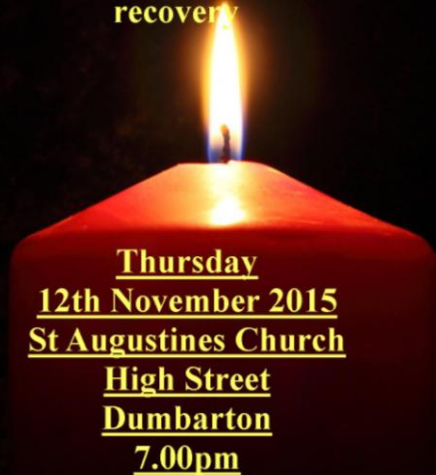
Special thanks to Caroline for spending so much time with me – and everyone else who helped me throughout the week!

Ruth O'Ryan

Dedication Service

The service is an opportunity for individuals, parents and friends to join in remembering those who have lost their lives through addiction.

It will also be a time for prayer for those still suffering and yet to find their way into recovery.



Thursday
12th November 2015
St Augustines Church
High Street
Dumbarton
7.00pm

The service is open to all in the Community. Please feel free to join with us on this night of prayer and reflection.

Dumbarton Churches Together

ADVENT EVENING

Sunday 6th December

7.30pm

St Augustine's Church

featuring
local Choirs
from

West Kirk, Riverside and St Patrick's
and All Sorts Choir



'Wait Till I Tell You.....'

Janette peers through the current autumn mists to reflect on all that's happening in the closing months of the year now that diaries are starting to fill up for an eventful 2016.

AN ALMOST PERFECT AUTUMN.

Autumn 2015 will be remembered for splendid scenery, greater than average sunshine, clear skies and misty mornings. Oh, and very little rain. So, with unaccustomed energy, I planted my spring bulbs and now look forward to the appearance of those first green shoots. TBag has been similarly inspired by our colourful autumn and has been noticed walking around the town with her eyes firmly fixed on the pavement. She has assured me that she is not picking up fag ends but searching for interesting leaves for some arty-farty creation she's involved with. See what the weather can do? If it had been raining we'd have been stuck in the house calling back old episodes of 'Emmerdale' or 'Doctor Who!'

BRING ON THE 'NO' MONTH!

Now we're in the dreaded month of November – the most disliked of the entire year. Remember the poem by Thomas Hood that said it all?

*No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no
birds.....November!*

What a negative Nellie **he** was! There's lots going on in Dumbarton and down at St. Aug's. Friends are having not one – but two social events. On 21st November you can enjoy a special performance by the Dumbarton Acoustic Music (DAM) folk with a supper of freshly made burgers and hot dogs complete with all the sauces and trimmings. This is a BYOB event but there will be a selection of soft drinks for those who don't like carrying booze on the Bellsmyre bus. On the bill will be AGM – Alistair, Gina and Michael - and other local artistes.

And to cater for all ages we're starting at 6pm and finishing just after 8.30pm – so you won't be late for Church the following morning! Cost is £5.00 to be entertained and supper is available at £1.50

for a burger or hot dog and £1.00 if you want a drink. So, see you all on the 21st for good music, good food, good company.....and a wee raffle - all in aid of Church funds.

THE RETURN OF THE STOVIE.

The never ending emphasis on TV eating programmes prompted the Friends' Exec to search for something that souped different for 'Oor Toon – Oor Times – Oor Tea' on Sunday 11th October. So, the decision was taken to bring back the great 'washin' day' dinner of the '50s – a plate of steaming hot stovies to be followed by a daud of cloutie dumpling. These were the days before M&S meals and carry out pizzas were invented. Old recipe books, bequeathed by mothers who could actually cook were consulted and eventually the St. Aug's Stovie was born. This old Scottish dish was shunned by a few while others sought second helpings – served by kitchen staff in yellow and black *tammies* hand knitted by Roberta for the chosen few.

And all this was happening while photographs of Dumbarton when it was a '*braw wee toon*' circa 1950, were handed round for identification.

The winning team, I'm reliably informed, achieved its success through the knowledge of Moira Kilburn who kept her non-indigenous members, known as the Tattie Howkers, (Sheila Campbell, Pam Goldie, Evelyn O'Neill and Anne Still) going in the right direction. Runners up was the team known as 'The Right End Group' consisting of such Dumbarton stalwarts as Maggie (born in the Renton) Wallace, Margaret Murnin, Christine Jackson and Nan Nimmo who quickly recalled life in our town in the days when buying a frock in Mary Pollock's was the ultimate in fashion ambition.

Then it was over to our visitors from the Glasgow Women's Library – Lorna Stevenson, Joyce Parlane, Doreen Cochrane and Isobel Cochrane. They spoke affectionately about growing up in the '50s, courtship including the dancing, finding work and giving it all up for marriage. These were the days before girls could simply choose a bloke on an internet dating site, rent a suitable flat with him and work even harder when the weans arrived! How life changes! Where did all the rituals go? The 'show of presents' was an unmissable event!

By this time the only man in our audience was becoming a little hot under the collar. But Andy,

an Allsorts soloist and renowned for his DPT performances as 'Valeman', stayed the course. James Bond would have capitulated at the first sight of an embroidered apron! Then the Memory Boxes were opened and we learned what Roberta got up to at the Clydebank Town Hall dancing – wow!

TRAVEL BROADENS THE MIND.

And we're in the season of the short autumn breaks with Margaret H and Irene choosing the Eternal City for their sojourn. Oh, they saw it all...and are now experts on the operation of Roman slot machines! Fran, on the other hand, opted for Marrakesh where she will undoubtedly learn her true value in camels as she haggles in the Moroccan bazaars! Can't wait to see what she brings back. Meanwhile a less ambitious group from St. Aug's and St Mungo's spent a sunny Saturday in Glasgow's West End attending a conference on Church growth and gained knowledge of Sunday school trends in England from 1910, attendance at Church in a plethora of middle England dioceses and making the tea!

TEN LORDS A-LEAPING!

Unfortunately for our esteemed Chancellor, considerably more than ten joined the dastardly plot to delay the Tax Credit fiasco on the 26th October. 289 peers voted 'content' – such a quaint way of expressing one's preference - while 272 voted 'non content'. George is so upset that he's banned the age-old Christmas song from all festive Tory get-togethers at number 11! Anyone would be content with the generous attendance allowances of £300 plus expenses just for placing one's aristocratic bum on a seat! Certainly worth ironing the red ermine trimmed robe for! And the latest addition to their ranks – Lady Mone, the *Irn Bra wumman* - will soon be Lady Cheer when she sees the perks that are available in her new role!

OUT OF AFRICA.

And into St. Aug's on Saturday 28th November starting at 6pm with a genuine 3 course African meal followed by drumming, dancing and a sale of African items that will help you find something different for your Christmas present list. Please put your name on the list in the Hall if you want to attend – cost is fully inclusive at £8 and £7 with Friends' discount. Please note that there will be real African people in charge not the Friends'

Exec dressing up with unwanted Hallowe'en costumes!

STRICTLY UNMISSABLE!

This extravagant dance programme certainly has the nation hooked and it is the number one discussion topic at the Saturday morning blether club down at St. Aug's – the place is fair buzzing. TBag is using all the technical terms she learned as a wean at the Jackie Stewart School of Dancing while others are forecasting which poor sods will feature in the Sunday dance-off!

FOLLOW THE LEADER?

Listen very carefully – Jeremy doesn't want Trident but his party members in England do. Kezia really wants Trident but her Scottish MPs are saying 'no' – apart from a few like our Jackie Baillie who doesn't want to upset any Helensburgh folk – I think! There will be trouble ahead.....I can't wait for the imaginative solution that will try to convince us they are all singing from the same hymn sheet!

DRUMTARTAN MEETS CHINA IN THIS YEAR'S PANTO.

In keeping with our nation's current policy of 'toadying' to all persons Chinese, this year's DPT panto, Aladdin, will be set in Beijing. But don't worry we'll still be insulting Clydebank, laughing at Helensburgh and mocking the Vale. Tickets, all at a fiver, will appear in McDermid's on 7th November. Oh yes, they will!

ADVENT BECKONS.

Welcome to the start of the big Christmas rush. No doubt next month's magazine will be crammed with greetings from non-card buying parishioners who all want to say the same thing 'Merry Christmas to all my Friends at St. Augustine's from Agnes, Wullie and the Cats'. It makes riveting reading but the donations are very welcome and will help with the bills that will surely follow after our promised 'big freeze' this winter.

So, with all this anticipated Christmas cheer 'By the Way Together' will be bulging and it'll take you till Easter to read it!

Back next month.

Janette



CHURCH GROWTH – THE TASK AND THE CHALLENGE!

On Saturday 24th October 60 Episcopalians converged on St Silas for a conference on Church numerical growth. The speaker was Bob Jackson who has written many books on the subject and who has got more statistical evidence to back up his theories than Peter Snow on an election night! What he said was not new for many of us – but he reiterated several interesting points which were, and are, worth hearing again.

Some of the points Bob made were:

- ✓ Church decline is NOT inevitable
- ✓ Churches today CAN and ARE growing
- ✓ Churches that are prepared to change, grow. Those that don't, close.
- ✓ Churches that follow the MAP-ing process (as we do in our Diocese) are much more likely to grow than churches that don't
- ✓ We HAVE to change from being an inward looking church caring for a Christian nation to become a missionary church reaching out into a post-Christian culture
- ✓ We have to be INTENTIONAL in our efforts to grow – it will not happen by accident
- ✓ Ask ourselves 'What is our vision?' 'What sort of church do we want to be?' 'How do we become that church?'
- ✓ Growth in church numbers will only happen if EVERYONE is working together with the same vision and moving in the same direction
- ✓ Coming to church is about belonging to a community NOT attending a weekly event

Eight changes that need to be made for churches to grow today:

- ❖ Making worship less formal and more relaxed in atmosphere
- ❖ Presence of joy and laughter
- ❖ Better provision for children and young people (even before you have any)
- ❖ Improving the welcome and integration into the church
- ❖ Good quality music which is varied and contemporary
- ❖ More lay involvement in leadership
- ❖ Better small groups and pastoral care
- ❖ Improvements to buildings

Much of this many of us know. Much of this many of us try to implement. But building the Kingdom of God requires constant effort, dedication and love... may we never fall into complacency.

PS Thanks go to the St Aug's and St Mungo's team who provided the teas, coffees and cakes for the hoards! Your efforts were well appreciated!

ROTAS FOR ST MUNGO'S

Sunday Nov 8th

Reader/Intercessions Pat Brooks
Chalice Tom Marshall
Sidesperson Alicia Steele

Sunday Nov 15th

Reader/Intercessions Jean Brown
Chalice Tom Marshall

Sidesperson Tom & Ian Marshall

Sunday Nov 22nd

Reader/Intercessions Pauline Dow
Chalice Tom Marshall
Sidesperson Tom & Ian Marshall

Sunday Nov 29th

Reader/Intercessions Pat Brooks
Chalice Tom Marshall
Sidesperson Alicia Steele

Sunday Dec 6th

Reader/Intercessions Jean Brown
Chalice Tom Marshall
Sidesperson Tom & Ian Marshall

CLEANING

8th Nov: Jean
15th Nov: Eveline
22nd Nov: Finella
29th Nov: Iona and Mary
6th Dec: Margaret

ROTAS FOR ST AUGUSTINE'S

Sunday Nov 8th

Readers Janette Barnes & Linda Macaulay
Intercessions Evelyn O'Neill
Chalice Maggie W & Barbara Barnes
Sidespersons Chrissie A & Roberta Mailley
Flowers Maggie Wallace

Sunday Nov 15th

Readers Ghislaine K & David Rowatt
Intercessions Maggie Wallace
Chalice Janette Barnes & Sharon Rowatt
Sidespersons Ronnie Blaney & Linda Jenkinson
Flowers Barbara Barnes

Sunday Nov 22nd

Readers Margaret Hardie & Morag O'Neill
Intercessions Sharon Rowatt
Chalice Maggie Wallace & David Rowatt
Sidespersons Lyndsey Spencer & David Ansell
Flowers Linda Macaulay

Sunday Nov 29th

Readers Evelyn O'Neill & David Ansell
Intercessions Margaret Hardie
Chalice Fran Walker & Barbara Barnes
Sidespersons Linda Jenkinson & Margaret Swan
No Flowers during Advent

Sunday Dec 6th

Readers Fran Walker & Kirstin Wiggins
Intercessions Linda Macaulay
Chalice Margaret Hardie & Janette Barnes
Sidespersons Roberta M & Chrissie Ashman

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Liam McLarnon; Gavin Elder; Caroline Marsland
Freewill Offering: Margaret Hardie

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