



The New Look

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Seasons Greetings

Wizard it Woz!



We followed the Monobloc Road in November, somewhere over the rainbow, to the Land of Augz, and had a wizard of a night with the Friends of St Augustine's! This was our annual big Fundraiser, and

with the Bishop gracing us with his presence, we managed to raise almost £900 for St Auggie's while having a wonderful time! It was just one of those things which brightens up a dull November! See centre pages!

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Christmas Day Services

Sung Eucharist of The Nativity - Christmas Eve at 11pm

Said Eucharist with Carols - Christmas Day at 10am

Annual Report of The Rector – 2010

General

Only a few weeks ago I marked the ninth anniversary of my Institution as Priest-in-Charge of St Augustine's. Of course much has changed in the last nine years. People have changed, buildings too, and the way some things are done. Somewhere along the line, on reflection, I became Rector! It was heartening to sit this week and think about progress, and how far we have come as a congregation, not least in consolidating and building on a long future for this congregation with guarantees of full-time ministry, but in buildings which are fit for purpose and rather handsome too!

I am continually reminded, not least by those who receive the parish magazine, that we seem to have a rather "busy" parish, and that is indeed the case. There is always something going on! Every month we seem to pack our diaries with special events or something significant, and Friends of St Augustine's help to keep that going in a unique and special way. The remit of Friends', when it was "reborn", was to find a way of bringing congregational members into contact with others in the community so that our mission and service could be encouraged and strengthened. It was a way to perhaps bring about congregational growth, have some fun, and perhaps raise some cash in the process! Today, with our new hall, we have another string to our bow in this effect, and the results will, I hope, be just as effective.

You may remember that this time last year we had just completed the hall building, and it was important to sit down as a congregation and plan how we were going to use this new tool for mission and service. We had to work out our priorities as a congregation and formulate a vision for the future. To that end, Revd Anne Tomlinson joined us in early December for a Parish Day which has shaped very much how we have tackled the past year and what our priorities have been.

The Parish Day outcomes are available elsewhere, but generally, we had four areas to develop; WELCOME, PASTORAL CARE, AUDIT OF TALENTS, LINKAGE WITH USER GROUPS AND DEVELOPING A MINISTRY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH MUSIC. Some of these areas have been tackled more successfully than others, however they are still areas that are being discussed and developed, and it's important that we keep them at the forefront of our thinking and planning. Many of the things mentioned in this Annual Report are the result of this Parish Day, and I believe it was a significant step forward for us as a congregation to crystallise our thinking and direction. This is about *doing* theology rather than *talking* about it, and we are doing rather well!

New Bishop

Rt Revd Dr Gregor Duncan was elected and consecrated as our new bishop this year, and he wasted no time in visiting us in early June, even managing a small part in the Friends' Murder Mystery Night on Royal Episcopalian Cruises. +Gregor enjoyed his day with us and is extremely supportive of our parish and our work here in Dumbarton. It was a delight to have him with us, and he should be with us soon as we plan a confirmation Sunday in the near future.

New Rectory

The opportunity to upgrade the Rectory presented itself this year, and the Trustees and Vestry took the plunge! St Andrew's Crescent was never meant to be a permanent solution as it never met diocesan requirements, and every now and again we were reminded of this. It was an extremely awkward building for a priest, especially with a family, to work from, and it was short of the extra room that rectories require. We purchased 54 Helenslee Cres at a very favourable price, but then had to wait until August of this year before the old rectory was sold. This was an anxious time for all of us, not least financially, but we have survived it and now have a rectory fit for purpose which is extremely pleasant to live in and work from. It is also nearer to the church which is a huge bonus.

Community Hall

A lot of work this year was invested in getting the Community Hall operational, and using it to fit the vision formulated on the Parish Day. There is a separate report on this, but I need to register how delighted I am in the way that things are beginning to shape up. There is a good balance between groups who can pay and those who can't, together with groups who can pay what they can afford! There is a good balance between groups who provide care and support in the community to people in need, and groups which develop confidence and well-being in people. It has been my pleasure to share office space with Janet Rae from Circle Scotland. Janet is working with the families of women who are in prison or who have been recently released, and is doing an awesome job in supporting them and bringing about some stability and order to fractured lives. Day conferences and staff training have taken place during the year, and the occasional party too! There is still plenty of room to hold parish events, but it's an area which is constantly developing and expanding. Cuts in services will hit many of our groups badly, and some intended "tenants" may never now get off the ground due to a lack of funding.

I am aware of the fact that many of you need thanked for opening and closing the premises for groups, and keeping the standard of cleanliness and hygiene high. We pay the final instalment of cash for the hall this month, and all the "snagging" should be completed by then!

Numbers

Final numbers for the Synod Clerk are not sent off until December, but already we can see trends. Communicant numbers on Sundays may show a little increase this year, although the attendance at Wednesday morning services has plummeted of late. This is something we need to address. We will be reporting six funerals and two weddings, together with an increased figure of communions made on Easter Day (91). The most heartening statistic will be eight baptisms, two of which were adult baptisms. Numbers on the Parish Roll are, however, fairly static! We are good at welcoming people, and there are always new folk coming through the door. Perhaps we need to look at new strategies for keeping more of them and consolidating our membership.

Pastoral Care

Tim Rhead has been a tremendous help, together with Margaret Wallace, in helping with the pastoral care of the congregation, but it has to be noted that this congregation excels in looking after each other in times of need and crisis, and we are indeed a “caring community”. After the Parish Day, a number of you attended specialised training provided by the Diocese in pastoral care, and it is with delight that I record that Maggie Wallace, Tim and Margot Rhead, Evelyn O’Neill, Barbara Barnes, Linda Jenkinson and Vernon Perrin have all completed the Diocesan Pastoral Care Course and have been issued with certificates to prove it! Ministry is something that we all do together, and it’s a privilege to share in *your* ministry to each other and the wider community.

Study Groups and Prayer Group

We ran a study group this year on the Apostles Creed, and another in Lent looking at the goals from the Parish Day and how to move more effectively towards them. Meanwhile the Prayer Group, meeting at Shirley Currie’s home has evolved somewhat and now includes Holy Communion in their monthly meetings. We need to revisit the structure and remit of Study Groups, and hopefully have something different in place for the New Year.

Friends and MAD

A report on the Friends of St Augustine’s will be presented at the AGM, but I continue to give thanks for all that Friends’ does for the parish, not only in enriching our social lives and the life and mission of the congregation, but also for the funds that are raised in doing so! Month by month some extraordinary evenings are rolled out and enjoyed by many, and the originality and energy which is put into these events is quite incredible. There is never a dull moment! We had only one MAD concert this year, with the Ukranian Accordionists returning, but once

again we were a venue for the local Quilting Exhibition. Thanks to all who make this part of our congregational life so varied, interesting, and attractive, not only to members but to others too! On the horizon we can look forward to the Monobloc Road to the Wonderful Wizard of Augz, and a Christmas Party which will hopefully include the whole St Augustine’s family including hall user groups.

Community Fair

As a result of the Parish Day, we are working hard on building bridges between what happens in the Community Hall and what happens in church. I see this about *building family*, the family of St Augustine’s. Not all of us will come to church, but we depend on each other, and *together* we minister to this Town Centre community. Projects and people overlap and that is essential, but there are other ways to build this family! The anticipated Christmas Party is one such way, as was the Community Fair which we held in August. Community Groups and Church Groups worked together on a warm sun-kissed day, and apart from raising a bundle of money for many different causes, we got to know each other better and took a first step in building the community which we envisioned. More work needs to be done in this area, but we have made a good start. I believe that our future depends on the success of this undertaking.

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.

Ecumenism

As a result of the EMU Covenant, an agreement in sharing ministry and resources between the Episcopal Church, the Methodists and the URC, I was asked to preach at the URC in Dumbarton on their Annual Foundation Festival. This is a link which needs to be developed. Of course we are heavily involved with Dumbarton Churches Together, and combine with parishes in the town in Christian Aid Week, helping to collect money and provide lunches. Again, we participated in the Annual Carol Singing and Good Friday Walk of Witness, the Christian Unity Week Service, and our shared services in Holy Week continued this year. Maundy Thursday in St Augustine’s, with the Passover Supper included, was as special as ever, but we are getting to the point where we may need to start issuing tickets! More and more of our brothers and sisters from other churches want to experience this particular liturgical event, and it’s great to share our riches with others. The Clergy Fraternal has met infrequently, mainly due to the high turnover in clergy in the town which has thrown us out of kilter of late! Normal service is about to resume.

Music

I reiterate almost exactly what I said last year, except to say that as a result of our Parish Day, we have recruited more young people into the Music Group albeit sporadically! We held a day workshop with young folk and produced an excellent musically based liturgy to end the day with! This sort of event will be repeated and improved upon. When I listen to the standard of music in many small parishes, as I mentioned last year, I am eternally grateful for what we have to offer God in the way of music in our worship. The Music Group is something we take for granted, perhaps, but we need to say a big thank-you to all who select our songs, hymns and psalms, and lead our singing on Sunday mornings. It is good, sometimes, to have a Praise Band leading our Sunday worship, although our core group are as good as any band we have had over the past few years. The organ restoration continues to be put on hold. We don't have a spare £100,000 anyway!

Sunday School

The Parish Day eventually produced a new Sunday School teacher in Margot Rhead, and we now have an excellent team in place. Numbers fluctuate, but we have a core of brilliant little people who light up our lives and deserve the best we can give them. Our thanks must go to Barbara Barnes for coordinating this work.

Fabric

Margaret Hardie and Fran Walker seem to have established a little "Fabric Team" which has taken on board this responsibility. I'm eternally grateful. There will be a Fabric Report at the AGM.

Parish Website

This has been overhauled of late and we now have a modern attractive website with as much news and information anyone could need. This is an important part of our mission and outreach, and I'm hoping to get some people involved in the maintenance and regular updating of the site soon.

Youth

Apart from joining the Music Group, it was fantastic to wave off Caitlin and Erin Dyer to the Scottish Episcopal Youth Camp in August, Glen10! They thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and hopefully we will send more young people next year.

Miscellaneous

It's been quite a year for one or two of our members. It was with great pride that we learned that Georgie Duncan had been voted Citizen of the Year for Dumbarton. She thoroughly deserved the accolade! Certainly, without Georgie the sacristy, and things like the beautifully starched linen, would be in a state of disarray, and I am personally extremely grateful for all the support she gives me. However, St Augustine's is only a small part of what Georgie

gives tirelessly for this community and it's great to see her efforts being recognised.

A big year, too, for Fran and Faye who were married in December and had their marriage blessed in St Augustine's. I've never done an inter-faith blessing before, but St Augustine's is always capable of being a leading light in matters unusual!

St Augustine's-tide was linked with the Gift Day for the first time and we had a very special Eucharist on the Sunday with Revd Fred Tomlinson preaching. It was just one of those magical Sundays that St Augustine's excels at! We also had a "Teaching Eucharist" this year, which hopefully helped us reach a deeper understanding of what is done every Sunday in church.

Personally, I managed a proper retreat this year and embarked on an evaluation of ministry scheme. There is much room for improvement! A lot of worry ended now that my father has settled into a Care Home and my heart has proved to be healthy after all, if perhaps a little irregular at times. I got to rip up my appointment Card and ditched the warfarin!

Thanks

I wrote last year: "There are so many people to thank that I would surely miss people out if I began to single out individuals. Suffice to say that I am often quoted as saying that I am Rector of the best wee parish in the West of Scotland. It is folk like you who make it so. However, I need to say a special "Thank You" to both 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" through the last year. Without those three we would all be sunk!" I simply repeat what is already on record!

The Last Bit

You may be aware of how much I appreciate being your priest and being so blessed with this ministry to which I am entrusted. I have never stayed as long as this anywhere before and it's just wonderful to be a part of the daily life of this congregation. Some think we are all a bit "loopy", but I wouldn't have it any other way. At the moment we are dreaming dreams and working, with the power and help of the Holy Spirit, to make some of these dreams and visions a reality. Sometimes we fail, often we do well. Such is life for the People of God. There is an enormous amount of faith, hope and love around here, and it all comes together for the Glory of God and God's Church. May God continue to give us all we need for the future times. To God be the Glory!

Kenneth Macaulay 2010

A TIME FOR JOYOUS USELESSNESS- OR: A DIFFERENT KIND OF ADVENT

Every year my sister sends me from Germany an Advent Calendar with the title: 'A Different Kind Of Advent'. For every day it contains a picture and a text, sometimes two, often colourful. It invites you to spend about twelve minutes per day reading, looking, thinking, and meditating.

That is not always easy. What can you do if there is a drill next door, or children shouting, or even some kind of commitment which you don't want to miss. The nicest thing about this calendar is, that it goes on over the whole of the Christmas period until Epiphany.

The Hamburg Professor for Theology Fulbert Stef-fensky some time ago introduced the calendar by writing on meditation. He says that you must not think that this is something elaborate, and you must not expect that a text gives you deep insights or visions, better you should not expect anything. He says: "You are like a host receiving a guest" in the shape of a word, a psalm, a picture, or a poem. Sometimes you are quite annoyed about the things you read, but as you would not show the door to an annoying guest, you need to accept your anger. Do not think how you would use the text or insight for another purpose, like for a sermon or a lesson at school, but it asks for 'creative passivity.' Passivity, as you don't do anything with it, creative, by listening to what your 'guest' has to say. The ancients call meditation "ruminare", which is what cows do, chewing it over, repetition. Repeating a text slowly, and with the rhythm of your breath, is a kind of ruminating. Meditation needs rhythm -repeat the text, learn it by heart.- and regularity:- don't wait until you are in the mood for it, you need a fixed time, which you chose, and a place, where you are unlikely to be distracted, and some kind of form for your exercise.

We do not live in monasteries or similar places of quietness, you may have to look for a while until you find your place, but you need not exclude the piano practice next door or the children's voices on the road, you could even 'let your text swim' on the noise of passing cars. Start and finish with some kind of ritual, the sign of the cross, the lighting of a candle, and finish with a blessing for all whom you are going to meet that day.

Meditation is not justified by some kind of usefulness. Everything useful seems to demand our first

attention, is more efficient. Maybe you need to defend this 'happy, joyous uselessness like the beauty of playing. Sometimes you might even get bored with your spiritual exercise like you do with running or other physical exercises. But this exercise forms your spirit, and that is a long term undertaking. And what happens if after some time you don't have the strength or the ability to continue with your exercise? Then at least you have done it for a while, and you may take it up another time. Defeat is part of living, and here the little which we do means an achievement.

And what has this all to do with Advent? Remember that Advent is a kind of Lent, as the colour purple in churches indicates. It certainly is the opposite of commercialism, of over eating and delicacies. The roast goose for St Martin's day used to be the last fatty meal before the fasting started, and it lasted until Epiphany. This wasn't a kind of self castigating but a call to be awake and sober for the coming of the Lord, to be a bit more sensitive and, maybe, on the look-out for those things that are good for the soul, the moral and emotional part of man's nature.

Brigitte Williams.

(Fulbert's article was in 'Andere Zeiten', 3, 2005)

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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

In some religions, women are obliged to sit on one side of the building and men on the other; would that there was a similar division between those who wish to “pass the peace” and those who do not. Separate buildings may be even better – preferably on different planets.

I was genuinely grateful when you came to help at our special Service last week, but when I bawled from the safety of the sanctuary “peace be with you” I did not expect you to gallop down the nave embracing everyone in sight. Certainly, a few of our weaker brethren were enchanted, but the sturdy majority were quite traumatised. A generalised “good morning” to no one in particular when entering church and then a noncommittal nod to the sidesman when you leave is all that is required. That is more than enough familiarity.

While you continued down the aisle like a galleon in full sail, Admiral Thomas, being an early recipient of your bonhomie, found it necessary to resort to his hip flask long before we even got to the sermon and others stood rigid in shock; after decades of attending church, someone had not only spoken to them but actually touched them. Several members are considering bringing a joint action against you for grievous bodily harm and Mr Parsons, who never attends church, is busy asking round the village, with a hint of menace, who assaulted his wife during divine worship.

I know that in your own church, this period of communal groping forms an essential part of worship, generally lasting slightly longer than your half-hour sermons, but at St. James the Least, the peace remains firmly un-passed.

You have also created a dangerous precedent. Dear Miss Timmins now waits at every service, ready to throw herself into the arms of any unfortunate who may so much as catch her eye. Others are on a hair-trigger, ready to drop to their knees and make it look as if they are in intense prayer, should anyone look as if they might approach with ulterior motives.

It has also significantly reduced our collections. Many now suspect that someone approaching them with a plate may be using it as a ploy and once they get near, discard it to throw their arms around unsuspecting worshippers. Diversionary tactics such as rooting in handbags for handkerchiefs, bending down to check for mice droppings, or intense examination of the roof beams, mean that the collection plate remains empty.

Perhaps next time, when you hear those fatal words, you keep your hands firmly in your pockets and your feet glued to the floor. It will come as a great relief to us all.

Our final wedding of the year was perhaps a little more memorable than any of us had anticipated. It was a charming scene, with everywhere covered in snow – although a good job the bride had a bouquet of red roses, otherwise no one would have been able to find her.

As the photographer, bridesmaids and I stood at the lych gate, the bridal car arrived, braked – and carried on, sliding down the lane sideways and into the neighbouring farmyard. Fortunately, Mr Jones was there to use his tractor to pull it out of the mud.

Our verger, having attended the diocesan verger’s guild Christmas party the night before, arrived late and did not have time to clear the church path. The path, being on an incline and bridal pumps not being equal to the task, the bride made a dramatic entrance into church backwards and on her bottom, demolishing the flower pedestal by the door in the process. Fortunately the petals stuck to the large patch of mud on her behind, making the congregation speculate throughout the service why she had a large floral cushion attached to her dress.

Our organist did not please the bride’s mother by changing the wedding march to the skater’s waltz as her daughter reeled up the aisle. He is still under a cloud from last week’s funeral for our local butcher, when he played at the end of the service Bach’s: “Sheep may safely graze”.

At St James the Least, the best man stands over a large heating grid. The poor soul, unaccustomed to our ecclesiastical arctic climate, was shivering so violently, he dropped the rings down the grid. There had to be a half-hour pause while the grating was removed and the groom, holding the best man’s legs, lowered him into the hole to fish for them, lost among choirmen’s peppermints and the organ tuner’s cigarette ends.

In future, I have decided that wedding rehearsals should be full dress rehearsals. The bride, in a hooped dress, was 4 feet wide; the vestry door is 3 feet wide. Getting in to sign the registers was fairly easy, as the bride, a game girl, took a run up along the chancel and so built up enough momentum. Her exit was more difficult, but with the combined pushing of groom and bridesmaids, she re-emerged into church like a cork out of a bottle – and demolishing the second pedestal of flowers in the chancel.

Married life, they say, is not always a bed of roses, but hers has certainly begun that way.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

ROTAS FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY 2010/11.

Sunday December 5th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Gavin Elder & Vernon Perrin.
Intercessions: Maggie Wallace.
Chalice: Fran Walker & Janette Barnes.
Sidespersons: Tim Rhead & Chrissie Ashman.

Sunday December 12th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Evelyn O'Neill & Barbara Barnes.
Intercessions: Vernon Perrin.
Chalice: Sharon Rowatt & Maggie Wallace.
Sidespersons: Ronnie Blaney & Linda Jenkinson..

Sunday December 19th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Toby Rhead & Sharon Rowatt.
Intercessions: Margot Rhead.
Chalice: : Margaret Hardie & David Rowatt.
Sidespersons: Margaret Swan & David Ansell.

Friday December 24th.

11pm Eucharist of the Nativity.

Readers: Janette Barnes & Ghislaine Kennedy
Intercessions: Rector
Chalice: Maggie Wallace & Barbara Barnes.
Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & Tim Rhead.

Sunday December 26th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Sharon Rowatt & Morag O'Neill.
Intercessions: Tim Rhead.
Chalice: Tim Rhead & Maggie Wallace.
Sidespersons: Linda Jenkinson.

Sunday January 2nd 2011

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Margot Rhead & Evelyn O'Neill.
Intercessions: Maggie Wallace.
Chalice: Maggie Wallace & Tim Rhead.
Sidespersons: Vernon Perrin.

Sunday January 9th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Fran Walker & Vernon Perrin.
Intercessions: Linda Macaulay.
Chalice: Janette Barnes & David Rowatt.
Sidespersons: Ronnie Blaney & Roberta Mailley.

Sunday January 16th.

11am Eucharist

Readers: Linda Macaulay & Barbara Barnes.
Intercessions: Margaret Hardie.
Chalice: Sharon Rowatt & Vernon Perrin.
Sidespersons: Chrissie Ashman & David Ansell.

Sunday January 23rd.

11am Eucharist..

Readers: Janette Barnes & Toby Rhead.
Intercessions: Evelyn O'Neill
Chalice: Margaret Hardie & Fran Walker.
Sidespersons: Margaret Swan & Tim Rhead.

Sunday January 30th.

11am Eucharist

Readers: Gavin Elder & Tim Rhead.
Intercessions: Fran Walker.
Chalice: Barbara Barnes & Maggie Wallace.
Sidespersons: Linda Jenkinson & Vernon Perrin.

Flower Rota:

Christmas Flowers:

Dec. 23/24 Maggie, Moira, Dee and ANY
OTHER VOLUNTEERS.
" 30th. " " check.

2011

Jan. 8th Rosemary McLeay & Linda Macaulay.
" 15th. Betty Gordon & Barbara Barnes.
" 22nd. Moira McGown & Dee Perrin.
" 29th. Maggie Wallace & Margaret Hardie.

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.

There is always room for more volunteers for Rotas. If you would like to read lessons, lead intercessions or be a sidesperson on a Sunday, please speak to Kenny, Tim or Maggie. There isn't a test or an audition. Just be able to speak clearly, be yourself and smile!



Clockwise: Bishop Gregor is accosted by a frightened lion, Gillian as Dorothy, Fran as the Good Fairy in her rainbow pulpit, a prayer of thanksgiving when the church was returned to normal, a tired RW Munchkin, the “dressed-up”,

Next page: Gavin & Maggie make a nice couple, Janette as you have never seen her before in her night attire, Sharon as a brilliant lion, David looking pretty clueless without a brain, an angry Tin Man, and a Munchkins Dance!





Smile-Lines

It may be Christmas, but does it meet Health and Safety....?!

The Rocking Song

Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir;
We will lend a coat of fur,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you:

Fur is no longer appropriate wear for small infants, both due to risk of allergy to animal fur, and for ethical reasons. Therefore faux fur, a nice cellular blanket or perhaps micro-fleece material should be considered a suitable alternative.

Please note, only persons who have been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check and have enhanced clearance will be permitted to rock baby Jesus. Persons must carry their CRB disclosure with them at all times and be prepared to provide three forms of identification before rocking commences.

While Shepherds Watched

While shepherds watched
Their flocks by night
All seated on the ground
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around

The Union of Shepherds has complained that it breaches health and safety regulations to insist that shepherds watch their flocks without appropriate seating arrangements being provided. Therefore benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available. Please note, the angel of the Lord is reminded that before shining his / her glory all around she / he must ascertain that all shepherds have been issued with glasses capable of filtering out the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and Glory.

Little Donkey

Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards with your precious load

The RSPCA have issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load that a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry, also included in the guidelines is guidance regarding how often to feed the donkey and how many rest breaks are required over a four hour plodding period. The donkey has expressed his discomfort at being labelled 'little' and would prefer just to be simply referred to as Mr.

Donkey. To comment upon his height or lack thereof may be considered an infringement of his equine rights.

We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star

Whilst the gift of gold is still considered acceptable - as it may be redeemed at a later date through such organisations as 'Cash for Gold' etc, gifts of frankincense and myrrh are not appropriate due to the potential risk of oils and fragrances causing allergic reactions. A suggested gift alternative would be to make a donation to a worthy cause in the recipients name or perhaps give a gift voucher.

We would not advise that the traversing kings rely on navigation by stars in order to reach their destinations and suggest the use of RAC routefinder or satellite navigation, which will provide the quickest route and advice regarding fuel consumption.

Rudolph the red nosed reindeer

Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer
had a very shiny nose.
And if you ever saw him,
you would even say it glows.

You are advised that under the Equal Opportunities for All policy, it is inappropriate for persons to make comment with regard to the ruddiness of any part of Mr. R. Reindeer.

If there had been three wise women...

they would have asked for directions
they would have been on time
they would have assisted with the birth
they would have cleaned the stable
they would have brought more practical gifts
(disposable nappies!)

**

With Hogmanay in mind...

Bagpipes and the Loch Ness Monster have two things in common – they attract tourists and terrify little children.

How do you get two pipers to play a perfect harmony? Shoot one!!

‘Wait Till I Tell You.....’

Janette's recollections of the last couple of months as she looks forward to a New Year and more dramatics!

A VERY DRAMATIC FRIENDS' EVENT.

October began with a Friends' visit to the theatre on the 7th preceded by tea in the hall and a wee talk about the production by the DPT Assistant Producer. But much of the drama was in the kitchen when a staffing shortage amongst the Friends' Exec had caused panic and mayhem. It had been unavoidable - sickness, hold ups at hospitals and holidays left only a few to manage the catering. Talk about a rush! Well, as one would have expected, all ended well. The theatregoers were fed, fuelled with sherry and sent off to the Civic but Margaret Hardie needed two weeks in Cancun to recover!

The play was Arthur Miller's 'A View from the Bridge' a very dramatic story of two illegal Italian immigrants and their effect on the lives of the dock workers on the New York waterfront in 1955. It was the tragic story of Eddie Carbone and we all know now how it ended in tears. The St. Auggie's people got really engrossed in the story and commented favourably on the acting and on the production. Best comment of the evening came from Betty Gordon.

There is a scene in the play where Eddie has to kiss the young male immigrant in a misguided effort to prove to his beloved niece that the immigrant is gay. Well, our Betty couldn't wait to ask about that kiss. *'The play was on for four nights - did these two men have to kiss every night?'* Oh aye, Betty, and we rehearse for six weeks before the production! Betty was aghast! *'Jings, and I see him on the bus in the morning. He's an awful quiet chap'*. Don't worry he's fine and he'll be making us all laugh in Panto in December!

DCT SAYS FAREWELL.

St. Augustine's was just the right location for members of Dumbarton Churches Together to say good-bye to Canon George Bradburn, formerly of St. Michael's and one of the founders of the organisation. He was presented with a gift, and his services to Church unity in the town were acknowledged. Harry Malloy of the Baptist Church said that before DCT we were all just Catholics or Protestants - now we were all good friends. Canon Bradburn thanked the group and said how much he'd enjoyed being part of it. He said he felt particularly at home in St.

Augustine's and has indeed often described our Church as a jewel in the High Street. He said he was sure the organisation would go from strength to strength. An excellent buffet with wine was served followed by a Prayer and Praise Evening with David, Sharon, Ghislaine and Ricky taking part with the wider Music Group.

‘THE MOST UNKINDEST CUT OF ALL’

The press eagerly awaited the announcement of the October cuts to cure our National Debt but struggled to find one that really tugged at the heartstrings. We had been so well prepared for the Chancellor's axe and were so embarrassed by our prolific spending sprees that we accepted our punishment like lambs. Well, he raised the pension age, grabbed some family allowance and did a purge on superfluous benefits. And that was that! No doubt the devil will be in the detail but the most disappointing was surely the news that Her Majesty had cancelled the Staff Christmas Party at Buckingham Palace. Her six hundred staff will be having a miserable Christmas but one must be aware of the financial situation facing our country. Yes, Ma'am, but there will be a festive 'do' at St. Auggie's as usual and if any of the palace punters (including you and your man) fancy a wee night out we'll put your names on the hall notice board.!

WHISKY GALORE REVISITED.

When the inhabitants of Skye opened their curtains recently, their hearts must have leapt for joy. There it was - a big boat grounded in their waters and well within rowing boat distance! And how they must have rushed to grab their wellies and oilskins until the BBC Radio Scotland announcer advised them that it was only a £1bn nuclear submarine and not a boat with a cargo of whisky. *'Ochone, Ochone, Donald - some islands don't have any luck!'*

STRICTLY NON DANCING!

Will the top heavy Rt Hon Ann Widdicombe survive yet another week or will she take up a post government job as a stunt wumman? She's certainly no dancer! And it's rumoured that the rope that held her aloft on her Peter Pan flight of fancy was the same one that pulled the thirty three Chilean miners from

the bowels of the earth last month.

But, she's certainly pulling the audience figures up - most people can't wait for Saturday nights! Perhaps she'll come through the floor eventually for another spectacular entry? No - she's more likely to go through the floor in one of the more elementary dance moves!

HALLOWE'EN MEMORIES.

As always, they were round dressed in beautiful costumes and wigs asking us if we'd like a Trick or a Treat. It was Hallowe'en! How Americanised we've all become! Remember your childhood days when getting a Hallowe'en costume was simple borrowing an old dress from your Mother or an old pair of trousers from your Dad and using your imagination?

Nowadays things might just be a little more difficult *'No, Kylie, I'm telling you, you can't have a pair of Daddy's old trousers - you know he's with his new partner and you're not due to see him till next weekend. And Gran doesn't have any old witchy dresses - she wears jeggings now and goes to a Zumba class. You'll get a Snow White dress in ASDA like everyone else!* To complement the costume your face had to be blackened with burnt cork from up the lum. This is now practically impossible with few real fires and also it's not politically correct to colour one's face for a laugh. Besides the shops are selling face paints with glitter for this purpose! Remember the excitement of making your own turnip lanterns with super sharp kitchen knives and then placing inside them a lit candle? Enough to make today's Health and Safety wallahs take immediate action. Naked flames? Pointy knives? That's really dangerous!

But if the Safety Officers didn't put a stop to the Hallowe'en fun think what the Child Protection squad would say about our guising episodes or *'goin' oot in the gloshe's'* as it was called in Dumbarton. Weans roaming around the streets trying to get invited into strangers' houses! And performing poems and songs for a few nuts and an apple. Aye, Hallowe'en was great fun in the olden days but it's a wonder we survived it all!

PANTO TIME - MAKE SURE YOU GET A TICKET.

This year it's on the 4th to 11th December and it's the Grimm Brothers' version of Cinderella. A few changes will be in evidence with this production and one of the characters will be the Rev. Ian Miller of

Bonhill Parish Church played by - who else? The Church is getting into everything these days! But don't worry, all the usual characters will still be there and the tickets will shortly be available. Be nice to a DPT member now!

THE BIG 70 FOR BARBARA.

Aye, this November saw us celebrating Barbara's big birthday bash. I just wish she would stop telling people that we were in the same class at school! I need to keep dyeing and lying for a few years yet!

FOLLOWING THE MONOBLOC ROAD...

Saturday, 13th November was the date of Friends' Big Event this year - a parody on the Wizard of Oz preceded by a Kansas style supper with wine and coffee - all served in the Church. Star of the evening was undoubtedly the new all singing, all dancing, heated catering trolley which kept our meals piping hot until served. We were catering for 80 so the kitchen workers were really stretched but miraculously managed to cope apart from a few minor hiccups. Aye, being a waitress at one of our 'big do's' is not a job for anyone of a nervous disposition.

Just prior to the meal, Ghislaine and Ricky, assisted by a few 'hingers oan' from the Music Group performed some Country and Western numbers to get everyone in the mood and to pass the time while the punters waited for their soup to cool! Soup was served with croutons (not cretins as was heard at the serving point!)

Then it was 'chat amongst yourselves time' while the 'performers' vanished into the Hall to get ready. Margaret Swan was unrecognisable in her pink tutu and orange wig while Linda found a better use for a traffic cone as a Munchkin hat! Linda and Jamie Lee were the boy Munchkins while Jackie and Rachel went for the cute look as the girls. Ghislaine, as the Good Witch Glinda, tried her best to herd this motley crew and although they gave the distinct impression that they didn't know what they were doing they looked happy!

Then we had Gillian - cool as a cucumber as sweet little Dorothy - singing beautifully and looking as if she knew what was going to happen next! Her dog Toto was played completely without rehearsal by young Keir Mailley - well done, Keir!

The story began with Maggie and Gavin as Dorothy's Aunt and Uncle. They ensured everyone

was au fait with the plot even although Maggie missed a vital entrance. No, it was not because she was talking! That's not fair!

Sandra indulged herself as the Wicked Witch of Westcliffe casting evil spells throughout the kingdom and obviously in need of a cup of tea! She gave Fran a horrible new face but became 'a nice wumman' in the end. In contrast, Fran made an enchanting Rainbow Fairy. Indeed the end of the Rainbow or St. Auggie's pulpit swathed in colour was a lovely focal point for the entire evening. Fran orchestrated the audience with Boo, We-h, A-ww, and Sing to keep the action going. Central to the entire show was Ken Watters on the keyboard who made a great job of accompanying the singing and covering any minor discrepancies!

As we all know, Dorothy meets some really remarkable characters on her journey. The first is Tattieogle (Scarecrow if you speak English) and played by David Rowatt. How convincingly he demonstrated his lack of a brain! Kenny, in his much acclaimed Tin Man outfit, looked almost alien and performed with just the right amount of 'grumpiness'. Sharon acted energetically as the Lion who was a 'feartie' and was clearly enjoying herself. She practiced her courage on the Bishop who again knew his line impeccably. One suspects he is getting a little bored with always getting the same line but it's hard enough trying to get the St. Auggie's lot to rehearse!

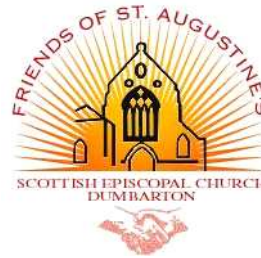
Happily everyone got their wishes granted except for those who had been served wings or legs when they had set their hearts on a breast! Sorry, folks, that's the trouble with chickens - they need to have two legs, two wings and only one breast. If another model was possible then M&S would have discovered it by now. Scottish Nights are much easier to cater for since the Haggis has only one vital organ and we all get the same. Roll on January!

And, as usual some of the audience dressed up. The winner of the fancy dress was Irene McCullough, Linda's pal, who won the Pot of All Gold from the end of the rainbow. You'll really be looking like a Munchkin now, Irene if you've finished the box!

All too soon it was time to go back over the rainbow and home to bed. Lots of folk helped to clear up since the Exec members were exhausted. The Church had to be returned to normal service for Remembrance Sunday next day. It was - and we were delighted to have raised over £900 - a great effort and wonderful support.

AND NOW FOR THE BIG CHRISTMAS RUSH....

So December is upon us and the pressure is on for Christmas. But just keep calm - See you all in the Merry Old Land of Augz in the New Year!



Janette

Friends in December 2010

Now that the Wizard of AugZ and the Monobloc Road has passed into the annals of St. Aug's history the Exec are busy planning what comes next.

Of course, December is always a time to get together with Friends, friends and congregation members to enjoy the two aspects of Christmas time. We will enjoy a Christmas party on Sunday 19th December at 4pm. This will be held in the church and will have all the things that you would expect of a St. Aug's Party. Food, games, wine, soft drinks, mince pies, decorations, crackers, singing, and we have already put in our invitation to Santa and maybe he will bring his elves along so that they won't be left home alone. This year we want to be joined by members of the groups who use our hall and are very much a part of St. Aug's community. This will make it a true 'family' occasion. As usual this party is free of charge, so please come along and bring friends and family, or maybe you know someone who is alone at Christmas and would enjoy the friendship which is offered to all.

At 6pm, after we have cooled down with a glass of mulled wine, we will move to the front of the church for what will be a special carol service, when we will celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. Everyone is welcome to come to this, whether they have been at the party or not, wouldn't it be great if we can spread the word to all corners of the community and attract folk that maybe haven't ever seen the beauty and peace of our building. You can all help to do this!

On January 30th we are having our customary Scottish Night and we welcome back Lennie and Myra to enter-

tain us once again. We don't apologise for repeating this event as it is extremely popular and guarantees lots of people coming to our hall and singing their hearts out.

Keep an eye on the notice board in the hall for the lists for both these events, the party one will be up very soon and put your name down right away.

Other events to mark in your diary are a Valentine's Day games night on February 13th and a Mad Hatters Tea Party on Sunday March 20th.

There is still a lot of planning to be done for these events so all I can promise you is that they will be fun, filling and Friendly. More details in the next mag.



Happy Christmas to you all!

Linda

From Tim

The Christian Aid Inter-Church Quiz will take place on Friday February 4th 7.30 at St Patrick's hall. Please contact Tim if you would like to take part.

Send a Greetings Card to a Prisoner of Conscience! Come to St Augustine's on Saturday December 18th from 10.30 to 1.30. Local Amnesty International members will have cards and addresses of prisoners worldwide. Please support this as always.

The Christmas Carol service in the Town Centre will take place at 12 noon on 18th December outside the Pound Shop. Carols and drama have all been arranged, and St Augs will heat the mince-pies as usual!

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service will be held at St Augs on 23/1/11 at 7.30pm. Please put this date in your new diary and support this annual event.

Religious Christmas stamps should be available at POs but may need to be requested.

Next meeting of Dumbarton Churches Together is on Mon 7/2/11 at St Augustine's.

Cursillo

We decided at the meeting on November 1st that there would be no meetings in St. Augustine's in December or January. I'll let you all know about February nearer the

time. There is a Diocesan Ultreya in St. John's, Johnstone on Thursday, 9th December at 7.30pm. I'll collect names and numbers on Sunday, 5th Dec. All the best for the rest of 2010,

Evelyn

Church in Society

The Bishop has appointed Kenny as Convenor of the Diocesan Church in Society Action Group, and that brings with it certain responsibilities which are close to his heart.

The Action Group is there to enable parishes in the Diocese to interact and respond to need in the local community, and highlight issues, whether they be poverty issues, injustice or environmental which should affect us in our personal and parish lives.

Now that it looks like the government is going to usher in the Big Society, and there will be massive cutbacks to services everywhere, it will fall to churches and other groups to respond to need in the community. As we have an incarnational faith, it's vital that we do so!

It's certainly a challenging post, and one that he looks forward to being heavily involved in.

Barbara Barnes

Barbara would like to thank everyone for their birthday wishes on her 70th, and was glad to share a celebratory weekend with **Sharon Rowatt** who has just graduated with a Degree in Housing Management!

A Happy Christmas



**From Kenny, Linda, Peanut,
Archie and Truffle xxx**

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**Wishing all at St Augustine's
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**



Cathie McKechnie

**Have a Merry Christmas and
A Happy New Year.**



Yvonne and Kenny McAlpine



**Margot and Tim wish all their friends at
St Augustine's
a Happy Christmas and God's richest
blessings in the New Year**

**We wish you a
Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year**



**Best Wishes
from Tam and Linda Jenkinson**

**Wishing everyone
a Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year**



Margaret Swan

**Best wishes
for a joyful Christmas
and a happy new year**



Love from Maggie



**Roberta wishes everyone
a Joyous Christmas
and a Happy New Year**

**Happy
Christmas!**

**To all my friends at St.
Augustine's
From Barbara**



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Treasurer: David Rowatt (dsrowatt@blueyonder.co.uk)

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Fabric Convener: Margaret Hardie and her Team

Project Development: Fran Walker (fran_walker@hotmail.com) Tel:- 01389 761403

Trustees: The Rector, Margaret Wallace (01389 757200), Barbara Barnes

Other Vestry Members: Barbara Barnes (barbarabarnes78@yahoo.co.uk) (01389 755984), Margaret Hardie (mghardie@blueyonder.co.uk) (01389 767983), Janette Barnes (01389 761398), (Janette.Barnes@btinternet.com), , Roberta Mailley (01389 731863), Anne Dyer, Linda Jenkinson (01389 761693), Gavin Elder, Margaret Swan, Rosemary McLeay, Shadrach Shame.

Regional Council Representative: Roberta Mailley (01389 731863)

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Rectory at Christmas and New Year

It will not have passed your attention that Linda's son Daffyd is being married on December 26th in Wales to Melanie. Kenny and Linda will travel down on Christmas Day after the 10am Eucharist and Carol Service.

We may miss out on Christmas Day celebrations in The Rectory, but are keen to make up for it at New Year!

As usual, there is the Big Invitation to any of you who wish to join us in the Rectory on Hogmanay. We usually begin from around 8.30pm and go on until whenever! Champagne and food will be on offer as well as the usual banter, and lifts are available for those who need a Parish Taxi home. So don't worry about the driving!

It would be really nice to see you all for the first New Year in our new home. Please come and join the fun.