

St Augustine's Dumbarton



The New Look

Issue 42 February 2010

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New Bishop - New Rectory - New Life

The long search for a new Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway has finally ended, and Electoral Synod voted overwhelmingly for our current Dean, Very Revd Dr Gregor Duncan. Most of us know Gregor, and indeed he came to preach at St Augustine's at the culmination of the Restoration in 2003.

The Consecration will take place on April 23rd, and there will be a celebratory Evensong in the Cathedral on Sunday 25th April, for the diocese to celebrate its new Bishop and at which the new Dean will be installed.

The Consecration is an all-ticket affair, but you are all welcome on the 25th to join our new bishop in this celebration!

This is a new beginning for the Diocese, and comes at a time of new beginnings for all of us! Ash Wednesday, and Lent gives us a new beginning, and as the winter's snow and ice fades away, for now, nature is proclaiming the new beginning of Spring! It's a time of renewal and new beginnings.

For Linda and Kenny there is also a significant new beginning, having moved into the new Rectory, at 54 Helenslee Cres on February 12th. The purchase of this property has been a very astute deal by the Vestry and Trustees, and the value of our congrega-

tional property has increased without any significant outlay on our part.

The whole move was not without incident. After the cold spell, and the house having lain empty for over a year, there was significant damage done when services were restored. A total of 26 burst pipes, ceilings coming in, and walls and floors having to be ripped up and replaced meant a considerable parish expense. However, John McFall

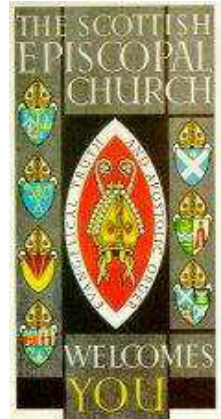
MP, and some brave St Auggie's wimmin to the rescue, and we were given a £5,000 goodwill payment by HBOS to cover the cost.

The new house is lovely, roomy, and, at last, means we meet canonical re-

quirements as far as our Rectory provision is concerned. That is something we have been being asked to address for a number of years now!

Our problem, now, is getting the house in St Andrew's Cres sold, for that is our investment income for the future!

It's new beginnings all round, and we are going to be thinking deeply about this during Lent. Our hall is up and running now, but there are issues to be thought through and tackled as we pursue the vision of being more outward looking, and a church for the Town Centre in 2010.



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Meet the next bishop

ELECTED the new Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway on 16 January, the Very Revd Dr Gregor Duncan is well known in the diocese, having been Dean since 1996 and Rector of St Ninian's Pollokshields for over a decade. Before taking a well-earned holiday after the election, he found time to tell DNS readers a little more about himself...

Back in 1984 when you were ordained as a vicar in the Church of England, could you have imagined yourself becoming a bishop?

No! I think I saw my future then as continuing as a vicar.

How did you see the role of bishop then?

My bishop then was someone of great authority and significance who lived in a medieval palace in the huge Diocese of Peterborough, which covers Northamptonshire, Rutland and Peterborough itself. He also had the reputation of being the rudest bishop in England! And he hated the Alternative Service Book. But he was much loved. He was someone of deep prayer and theological acumen. He was very pastoral-minded and took an interest in all of his clergy. I knew he prayed for me and cared what I was doing.

What's different now?

Apart from the rudeness? Well, the scale is very different. Whereas the size of an English diocese can make a bishop quite a remote figure, in the Scottish Episcopal Church, you are much closer to people. A lot is fundamentally the same, though: you are there to support and care for the clergy and lay leadership, offering your personal presence, giving people time, space and prayer every day. That's particularly important in a church of our size. Ours is also a very diverse diocese, and part of my role will be to hold it together and help people feel they belong to one another.

Tell us something that you're especially grateful to have inherited from Bishop Idris.

I learned a lot from working with Bishop Idris. He is a genuinely open-minded and very loyal person who helped me see I also could be open-minded without being unprincipled. I also have gained a wider theological grasp than I would have.

What were the hardest things about being a candidate?

To be exposed to such deep scrutiny by my peers, especially at the Electoral Synod. Wondering if I would be found wanting, and knowing that if I fumbled the final stage it would have haunted me. Besides that, there was the huge sense of uncertainty with my life and my congregation's. At times it seemed hard to keep that in perspective.

What was the best thing?

The sense of being prayed for and supported with love and

concern was quite tangible. When it came to it, it was wonderful to know I could share myself and be open, especially with the preparatory committee and Electoral Synod.

What will you miss most about your parish work?

Being in the midst of just one congregation, helping them as they try to be a community of faith. Apart from a brief time as a theological college chaplain, being a parish priest has been meat and drink to me for years. That intimacy is not going to last much longer.

Three things you pray for Glasgow & Galloway as you look forward?

- ◇ That our clergy will know they are valued, encouraged, challenged and prayed for by their bishop;
- ◇ That all of us as a diocese could be more together, enjoying God's gifts and finding delight and joy in being together in parish life;
- ◇ That the main focus of our lives as Christians is what we do in the world and not what we do in church, so we are energised, sustained and transformed by Word and Sacrament in order to live faith day by day.

Three things you want us to hold in our prayers when we pray for you?

- ◇ That I remember to seek proper support and counsel – because it is an isolating job otherwise;
- ◇ That I remember to sustain the daily discipline of prayer when I no longer have my 'own' church to go into;
- ◇ That I, too, will find joy – in being bishop.



Dean Gregor Duncan (59) succeeds the Rt Revd Dr Idris Jones, who retired last year after serving the diocese as Bishop for 11 years.

A graduate of Glasgow University, he went on to study for his PhD at Cambridge. He was ordained priest in 1984. In 1986 he returned to Scotland to serve as chaplain at Edinburgh Theological College. Before moving to his present charge in Pollokshields, he was Rector of St Columba's Largs from 1989 to 1999.

His interests include collecting records and CDs, cooking, entertaining, and reading modern novels, travel and history books.

The election was carried out by an Electoral Synod (comprising representatives of clergy and lay church members from the Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway) and was chaired by the Most Revd David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, who said:

"I am delighted to welcome Dean Gregor Duncan as the next Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway. He has faithfully served the Scottish Episcopal Church and the clergy and people of Glasgow and Galloway for many years.

"He is widely respected and admired for his faithful pastoral care and the strength of his spirituality."

The Consecration Service will be held in St Mary's Cathedral, Great Western Road, Glasgow, at 6.30pm on 23rd April. Due to the large number of official guests and the capacity of the Cathedral, admission will be by ticket only.

Rotas for Feb/Mar 2010

Sunday Feb. 21st.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Margaret Hardie & Evelyn O'Neill.

Intercessions: Colleen Bell.

Chalice: Sharon Rowatt & Tim Rhead.

Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & L. Jenkinson.

Sunday Feb. 28th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Maggie Wallace & Sharon Rowatt.

Intercessions: Evelyn O'Neill.

Chalice: David Rowatt & Vernon Perrin.

Sidespersons: Jean Carr & Chrissie Ashman.

Sunday March 7th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Barbara Barnes & Janette Barnes.

Intercessions: Fran Walker.

Chalice: Colleen Bell & Maggie Wallace.

Sidespersons: Vernon Perrin & Sandra O'Neill

Sunday March 14th. Mothering Sunday.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Ghislaine Kennedy & Gavin Elder.

Intercessions: Margot Rhead.

Chalice: Fran Walker & Margaret Hardie.

Sidespersons: Ronnie Blaney & Margaret Swan.

Sunday March 21st.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: David Rowatt & Yvonne McAlpine.

Intercessions: Tim Rhead.

Chalice: Barbara Barnes & Janette Barnes.

Sidespersons: Margot Rhead & Jean Carr.

Sunday March 28th. Palm Sunday.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Fran Walker & Vernon Perrin.

Intercessions: Ann Dyer.

Chalice: Sharon Rowatt & Tim Rhead.

Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & Linda Jenkinson.

Flower Rota: No Flowers during Lent.

Church Walks

The first walk of the year is on Saturday March 20th, meeting at the church hall at 1.30pm.

We walk along The Leven to Strathleven House returning along the other bank.

Other Walks planned this year:

APRIL 17	FINLAYSTONE NEAR LANGBANK
MAY 22	ABERFOYLE TO FAERY HILL
JUNE 19	BONHILL TO PAPPERT HILL
JULY 17	GREENOCK CUT
AUGUST 21	ELDELSLIE TO KILBARCHAN
SEPTEMBER 18	QUEEN ELIZABETH FOREST PARK
OCTOBER 23	FIRKIN POINT LOCH LOMOND

Christian Aid Lent Lunches

These will be held on Thursdays February 25th to March 25th at Riverside Church Halls.

St Augs is responsible for March 18th. If you can provide soup and / or help, please see Tim or Colleen. Please support the lunches.

A Big Thank-You!

In December I had an operation at the Royal Alexandra Hospital. I would like to say thank you very much to all the folks in St. Augustine's and in Friends who sent cards, visited and prayed for my recovery. Also thanks to those who took me shopping, substituted for me on Church rotas and generally kept me cheery. I'm feeling so much better now and will soon be back on full power. It's great to have friends!

Roberta

World Day of Prayer 2010

The World Day of Prayer will be celebrated this year on Friday 5th.March. The service in Dumbarton will be in Riverside Church at 2-30p.m., led by John McFadden of St.Michael's.

The service this year is written by the people of Cameroon in Africa, with the theme, Let Everything That Has Breath Praise God.

Exactly the same service takes place worldwide on that day. I have taken part in a Roman Catholic Church and in a Methodist church in South Africa on a few occasions. I found it very moving and uplifting, as I took part, to think that people all over the world, especially in Dumbarton, were worshipping, using the same words, prayers, and singing the same hymns as we were there. Please come on that day. I look forward to seeing lots of you there.

Maggie Wallace

Gambian Update

Fran and Faye have returned from a month in The Gambia, a honeymoon of sorts (!), and bring with them positive news about the school and how things are going there. Normally I would be out there in January to renegotiate contracts, assess what needs to be done or tweaked, and generally keep a watch on what is going on! This year, much to the disappointment of the school staff, they got Fran instead, and the only reason that disappointment reigned was because I am a totally soft touch, and Fran isn't!

There were a couple of hard decisions that had been made which Fran carried out for us, the main one being the suspension of the Adult Training/Literacy classes. These had become rather sporadic, and because our budget was getting tighter and tighter, something had to go in a cost-cutting exercise.

There should be a full update soon, but it was heartening to hear that the standard of education offered has improved significantly, and the children are responding well and continue to be fed and looked after medically.

Fr Jimmy has been appointed a Canon of St Mary's Cathedral, Banjul, but he still labours on in Christchurch, Serrekunda as well as having his full-time job! Fran writes:

"On my second Sunday in the Gambia I went to Christ Church, Serrekunda, along with Paul Baird and a young Congolese woman. It was a joyful baptismal service, but it seemed unusual when, towards the end, those concerned with the baptism left the church (more than half the congregation in a nearly full church).

It wasn't for long and when they re-entered there was an even bigger surprise. The whole party processed up to the altar preceded by a large goat and a sack of onions! There was much thanksgiving and eventually the goat was taken outside and tethered to the church lawn. (Paul and I admitted to each other afterwards that thoughts of ritual sacrifice in the church had passed through our minds.)

I haven't had a chance to find out about the current whereabouts of the goat. I'm pretty sure that it was soon

slaughtered and the meat (plus onions) distributed amongst the needy.

St Aug's folks, please note there is no longer any grass since our hall has been built amongst chips instead, yet thanksgiving is always welcome."

It's always great to hear of some of the folk over there who became friends of St Augustine's members through individual trips out there! Again, Fran brings us some news:

"When we were in Sarges Hotel (ex Tafbel for those who have been there) we asked after Ousman Sanyang. He is now at hotel school in Norway and doing well.

We also met up with Alex (knitter and crocheter) who was helped with fees to do the Tourism course. He is doing fine as a guide and now runs 'safari' trips in his Discovery 4 x 4. He has put on a bit of weight, is looking good and was proud to show us his 'new' car and tell us how much he appreciated the sponsorship he received. All he asked was us to recommend him to any friends who may be visiting The Gambia.

For the most moving thing I had to do on this trip was to take a birthday present from Pete McMartin's daughters to Fatou, the girl Pete sponsored from about the age of 4. Since his death the sponsorship has been continued by his son. Pete's legacy lives on in a bright young girl with the biggest smile in The Gambia. She is now in grade 7, having been third in class in grade 6. Fatou lives with her very large family in a compound which has

now been divided in two, so there is less room to grow basic food. This family obviously appreciate all that is being done for Fatou - as you can see from the photo they all come out to greet us."

We look forward to a full report of all the "goings-on" once Fran gets her brain back in Scotland, but it's wonderful to see young people getting on because of your generosity and the help of others.

We are always looking for help in funding, and if you would like to contribute, or have any fundraising ideas, then Linda or I would be more than happy to hear from you!

Kenny



Don't "Give Up" in Lent!

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has called on Kirk members to find ways of being better Christians, rather than avoiding things such as chocolate, alcohol or cigarettes during Lent.

The Rt Rev Bill Hewitt says the sacrifice of time and talents in service encourages people to re-order their lives and would be much more beneficial than just giving up things for the 40-day period which recalls Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness

"This Lent I'm calling on Kirk members to take something up, rather than give something up," the Kirk Moderator declared.

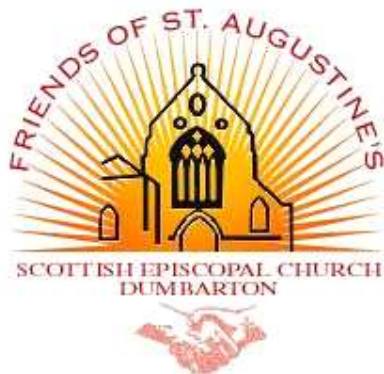
He continued: "Many people use the discipline of these weeks to give up chocolate or fish suppers or the likes, but I prefer the idea of Lent being a time of giving of ourselves in service to others. This runs contrary to a culture that suggests that the only thing that motivates people is money."

Christian people, he suggested, should not be motivated by financial gain or by living hedonistic celebrity lifestyles, but instead by serving others.

"No one can fail to see the devastating effect the selfish pursuit of money has had in the financial sector and beyond. The 40 days of fasting and prayer before Easter represent the time Jesus spent in the desert overcoming the temptations to use power in the pursuit of wealth, fame and popularity," said Hewitt.

Friends Events

Make sure you have the latest Friends' Events in your diary: Don't miss two crackling evenings!



Sunday 21st February – Mama Mia night

Enjoy the chance to relive highlights from the feel good film by singing, dancing and enjoying Greek food. Starts at 6 pm. Cost £5.50 Friends, £6 others.

Fridays 26th March – 40s night

An evening devoted to celebrating the best of British/Scottish spirit during the 40s. Food, entertainment, quiz and more. Bring your ration books or you might not get fed! Further details to be released soon.

Christian Aid - Supper Dance

The Supper Dance takes place this year in St Patrick's Hall to raise funds for Christian Aid. Put the 6th March in your diaries, and get your tickets from Tim or Colleen. The event kicks off at 7.30pm and runs until 11.30pm. A great night for a very important cause!

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St James the Least of All..

(We continue to publish our series of letters from Eustace, a wise old Rector to his nephew Darren, Curate in a much more modern, evangelical setting!)

The Rectory St. James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

While it was good to see you when you visited us last Sunday, your casual suggestion to our churchwardens that chairs would be far more comfortable than our pews was not well received. You must remember that significant numbers in any congregation firmly believe that the more uncomfortable they are, the holier they must be. Pews, generally designed several centuries ago when legs were shorter and bottoms smaller, are conducive neither to comfort nor sleep - although Colonel Marchington achieves the latter unerringly every Sunday within minutes of arrival.

At least with pews, parishioners can make some pretence at kneeling, adopting that peculiar crouch only ever seen in church life. Attempt that with chairs and you are assured of sending the one in front sliding across the floor with a shriek any banshee would be proud of. Chairs may be all very well in your own church, so you can create space for the delights of liturgical dance and baby clinics, but we prefer something more immovable. Little Miss Thripp has, over the years, created something of a nest where she sits, quietly bringing in cushions, travelling rugs and her own supply of books and peppermints – although we did have to draw the line at the primus stove, since it encouraged Major Hoare to install a drinks cabinet in his pew.

Pews, unlike rows of chairs, also create territorial behaviour. If a visitor should sit in a pew where regulars have sat for the last 50 years, it is regarded as if it were the invasion of Poland. One innocent family once chose the pew where generations of the Psmith family have sat since dinosaurs roamed the land. The Psmiths had no intention of ceding territory peacefully and so for the whole of Mattins, one pew which should have held 6 people sat 9. When they stood to sing, the line exploded into the aisles on both sides, returning to their compressed state, necessitating staggered shallow breathing, when re-seated.

I will concede, however, that we made one mistake some years ago when the pews were re-varnished without having been fully cleaned first. The result is that every time the congregation stands, the organ is drowned out by the sound of tearing, while coats and jackets reluctantly part company with wood. No, your congregation may relax in the luxury of padded chairs, but we will stoutly maintain our holy discomfort.

This year, the rigours of Lent have taken second place to a far more pressing matter: the installation of a lavatory at St. James the Least. Personally, I entirely disapprove of this additional sign of decadence in our moral fibre; we have survived perfectly happily for the last 800 years without one, so why is there such an urgent need now? And being surrounded by acres of fields, there seems to be a completely acceptable alternative.

It also spoils the pleasure I used to take, informing ushers at weddings, having liberally refreshed themselves at our local pub before the Service, that we have no facilities and that they would just have to wait. Their look of pained resignation, developing to clear signs of repentance as the Service progressed, was most cheering. It also meant that wedding parties did not linger after the Service but disappeared with commendable speed to safe havens.

I anticipate that now we have the thing, a sub-committee will inevitably form to devise a commissioning Service for the person who will be in charge of its maintenance. I can already foresee Lady Bartlett proposing an appropriate set of robes for the office holder – although it will need some tact to select suitable insignia on the sleeves.

In fact, the project has not been entirely successful; we still need to have a lock fitted and so at present, occupants have been advised to sing hymns loudly, preferably something rousing; “Onward Christian soldiers” would be ideal. A hymn book has been installed as an aide memoire.

The greater difficulty arises from our antiquated plumbing system. A member of the congregation can leave a Service perfectly discreetly; they can enter the lavatory unseen by anyone, but on flushing, water is drawn through pipes running the length of the inside of the building with a thunderous roar that obliges me to stop preaching until the cataract has subsided. By the time the customer returns quietly into church, all noise has ceased and they remain oblivious of the chaos they caused and the stoic politeness of the congregation.

I am sure that in your worship centre you will have lavish cloakrooms furnished with colour co-ordinated walls and towels, baby changing facilities and video monitors relaying everything going on, so that users will not be denied a single second of your hour-long sermons. .

Our congregation should be grateful for what they now have. And to think that someone even suggested it should have heating!

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Dumbarton Churches Together

The meeting in St. Augs on 1st February began with much hilarity over an extract from the minutes of the previous meeting which read ‘*remember xxxxxxxx xxxx and her family in our prayers this evening as they are suffering from swine flu and also the arrival of a new baby*’.

Arrangements for the Spring Festival were discussed and dates and venues are as follows:

16th April. Salvation Army Band 7.30pm in St. Augustine’s.

17th April. Ceilidh in St. Patrick’s Hall with Buffet, Bar, Quiz and Raffle.

(Tickets £6.00 available soon from Tim or Janette).

18th April. Big Praise Night in St Augustine’s - details in next month’s magazine.

Please remember, also, the Walk of Witness will take place on Good Friday as usual with crosses being carried from three areas in the town and an outdoor service in the town centre. Good Friday is on 2nd April this year.

Please support as many as the DCT events as you can. Thank you.

Janette

Birthday Cards Update

The scheme to send everybody on the Parish Roll a Birthday card has now been running for just over a year so I thought people might be interested in a short update.

At the moment, we have about 90 names on the list for receiving a card. All the feedback I’ve received has been very positive. People seem to like the idea that their church cares enough about them to remember them on their special day, whether they are able to get to the church on a regular basis or not. It may seem like a little thing to many of us, but I think it is an important part of the Pastoral Care that St Aug’s is known for and wants to develop further.

I’d like to thank all those who have helped in the past and who continue to help with this work now. In particular thanks go to those who have made cards and passed them on to me to use – 90 cards is a lot for one person to make and the task has been made a lot easier by the fact other people are willing to make them too. Also, those who have offered to pass on

cards to someone else have made the job that bit easier. When I agreed to take it on, I forgot how many streets Dumbarton has and the fact that, at times, someone has said “Oh give it to me, I’ll hand it in” has been a great help.

If anybody else wants to get involved in any way (card making, delivering, helping to organise the list, whatever) then please let me know.

And if you know of anybody at all whose name isn’t on the birthday list then tell me about it or add it to the Birthday Book in the church.

Morag O’Neill

Prize Draw

This year we have decided to postpone our Prize Draw until Easter. Several organisations have Christmas raffles and draws so we thought that leaving it until Easter may be more beneficial to us. We hope that we can still count on your support with prizes and promotion of our tickets. The Easter Bunny will be in attendance in April to draw the prizes!

Lent Group

We are meeting at 7pm during Lent on Wednesdays in the small meeting room to look at some of the issues which were flagged up during our Parish Day with Revd Anne Tomlinson in December.

We “caught a vision” that day, and now is the time to tease that out, communicate it, and root it firmly in the Gospels and in our prayers. You will remember that Anne gave us a starter on the Gospel of the woman at the well, and the Living Water.

Wednesdays through Lent, then, will be “Living Water Meetings”, and should last from an hour to 90 minutes maximum. All are welcome!

Haiti Appeal:

Barbara and her team ran a very successful Coffee Morning for Haiti, and together with some donations, we were able to send off a cheque for £465. Thanks to all who helped or contributed in any way.

Holy City

This is a monthly workshop & worship event for curious folk and faithful doubters concerned with the contemporary challenges for progressive Christianity. Organised by the Wild Goose Resource Group and others, the next night is Sunday 28 February, 7pm, Renfield St Stephen’s Centre, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow.

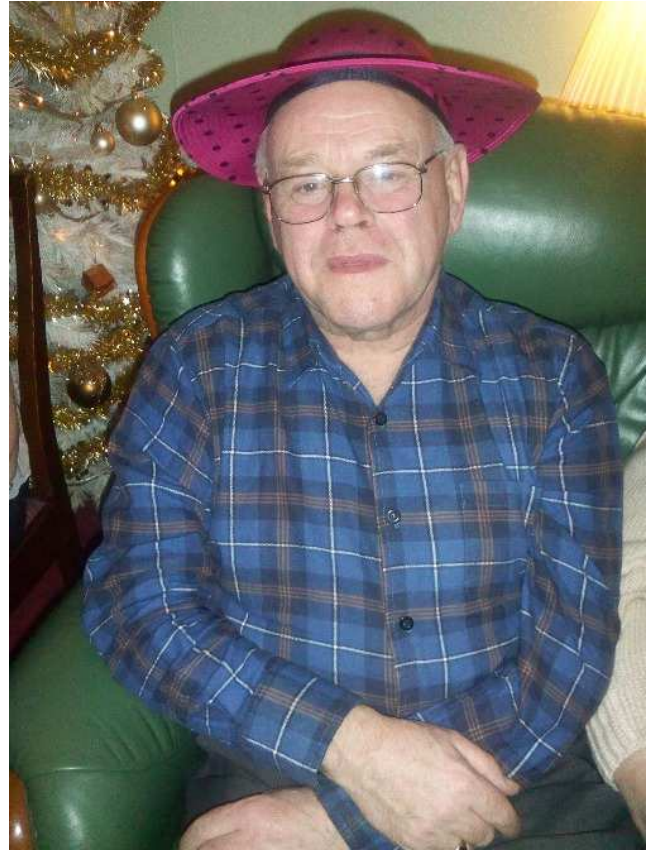
MacWinter Magic!

A rare wee night in January when we celebrated all things Scottish, including Sharon's Bingo, and chased away the winter blues! The ones on their feet singing on the chairs are giving "The Star of Robbie Burns" lalady!



Mad Hatters at New Year!

*We all squashed in to the old Rectory for a last party! David looks quite fetching in his pink number!
Bottom right is our photo of Marcus' Baptism in January, and not a goat on sight!! (See the Gambian Update) Here
he is with mum, Susie, bringing some sanity to our picture pages for this month!
His special day will be one of the highlights of our year! What a star!*



THE MAYONNAISE JAR

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and two cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him.

When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a very large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students, if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly, the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed.

The professor next picked up a box with sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a nod.

The professor then produces two cups of coffee from under the table and poured them into the jar, effectively filling the empty spaces between the sand. The students laughed.

Now, said the professor, as the laughter subsided, 'I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things – family, children, health, friends, favourite passions, whatever you value most. Things that, if everything was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, house, car. The sand is everything else, -the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first', he continued, 'there is no room for the pebbles or for the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

SO:

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children, take time to get medical check-ups, take your partner out to dinner.

There will always be time to clean the house and recycle your rubbish. Take care of the golf balls first- the things that really matter- set your priorities.

The rest is just sand.'

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented.. The professor smiled and said : 'I am glad, you asked,~

'It just goes to show that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a cup of coffee with a friend'.

SPRING

March 21 is the Equinox, when the days are getting longer than the nights. This is when the Roman Year used to start, and the Iranian year still does. Hopefully, by that time winter gives way to spring flowers. Indeed, at the time of writing, the witch hazel and snowdrops in the garden are already in bloom.

People and animals wake up from their winter sleep and discover a new joy of life. In Germany some churches celebrate open air services of 'Creation'.

One morning you step out of your front door and find that your neighbours seemed to have grown. Obviously, only the children did, but the grown ups seem to walk more upright and you see their faces free from hats and scarves and up turned collars, and those faces are smiling. It is some time till Easter, but nature is already experiencing a resurrection. The Island Pastor of Keitum, Germany, writes in one letter to his congregation that we need 'joy of life, zest for life, we need to make joy our secret': take every opportunity for joy, touch flowers, go for walks in the sunshine and under the stars, have conversations, listen to music.

For our ancestors winters were a question of survival. We can hardly imagine what it was like to be huddled around a single source of warmth in the hearth, always worrying if there was enough to eat in the larder and enough hay for the cattle. Some old people told of 'counting the springs', to reach spring time you had another year of life in you.

Our ancestors celebrated the end of winter with festivals for Spring. Some churches in Germany still have services of Creation, one at Bremerhaven had a festival of tulips, when everybody got a tulip from the decorations to take home, it was a cause for being thankful: Whoever is thankful stops and thinks to contemplate the beauty of creation.

These services also include music, sometimes brass bands, neighbours and non members of the congregation can be invited – it is a means of outreach. Mothering Sunday seems to suggest another date for such an event which appeals to 'non church goers'.

Services like this often take unconventional forms, but would need an imaginative pastor to lead and the congregation ready to follow.

Brigitte Williams

(using an article in Andere Zeiten 1/2003)

Smile Lines

It was Palm Sunday but because of a sore throat, eight-year-old James stayed home from church with a neighbour. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds. James asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," his father told him.

"Wouldn't you know it," Johnny fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go, and he shows up."

**

A few years ago a small village in the Cotswolds was plagued by a gang of youths. They came in on their motor-bikes every weekend, and were everywhere, causing trouble.

A village meeting was held about how to get rid of them. The folk who used to go fox hunting were for luring them into a field and then chasing them off on horseback. The town's solicitor was for beginning a legal action against them. The town's policeman was for arresting them.

Then the local Vicar had an idea. With the help of some take-away pizzas he lured the gang into his church one Saturday evening and shut the door on them. Early next morning he and the bishop went in, and together they baptised and confirmed the lot. Several of the more difficult ones were even made to sign the electoral roll.

The youths were then let out of the church, and quickly departed. Now full-fledged members of the Church of England, they were only ever seen again at Christmas and at Easter.

**

This a true story: a little Baptist church had made so many demands on its old minister that he had retired early, just to get away. As the new minister was installed a few months later, the church elders stressed how important it was that the congregation respect the new pastor's free time. Everyone nodded enthusiastically.

Next morning in the parsonage the phone rang before 6am.

The pastor leapt for the phone, heart pounding. "Good morning, pastor," said a cheery voice. "I just wanted to catch you before you begin your day off..."

**

Hospital update

A 75 year old lady rang her local hospital with a polite enquiry. "Please could you give me some information on one of your patients? She is Mrs Tiptree in Ward 3. She was admitted last week with chest pains and I just want to know if her condition has deteriorated, stabilised or improved?"

The nurse on the ward checked the notes. "I'm pleased to say that Mrs Tiptree's condition has improved. She has re-

gained her appetite, her temperature has steadied and after some routine checks tonight, she should be well enough to go home tomorrow."

"Oh that's wonderful news, I'm so happy, thank you ever so much!"

"You seem very relieved, are you a close friend or relative?"

"No, I'm Mrs Tiptree. Nobody tells me anything in here!"

**

Following a funeral service, the pallbearers carried the casket out of church when they accidentally bumped into a wall. From inside the coffin they heard a faint moan. Opening the lid, they find the man inside alive! He leapt out, performed a little jig, and lived another ten years before eventually keeling over.

Once again, a funeral ceremony was conducted, and at the end, the pallbearers began to carry out the casket. As they headed toward the doors of the church, the wife of the deceased leapt to her feet and shouted, "Watch the wall!"

**

There are women whose thoughtful husbands buy them flowers for no reason. And then there's me. One day I couldn't stand it any longer. "Why don't you ever bring me flowers?" I asked.

"What's the point?" my husband said. "They die after about a week."

"So could you," I shot back, "but I still like having you around."

**

If I can quote lines out of the Bible, would I be well-versed in it?

**

The little boy came home from his first day at Sunday School. He told his mother that his Sunday School teacher was Jesus' granny. Startled, his mother replied, "'How did you reach that conclusion?"

"Well, she never stops talking about him," he replied.

**

Adam & Eve

At Sunday School the children were learning how God created everything, including human beings. Little Josh was especially intent when the teacher told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down and looking scared. "Josh, what is the matter?"

Josh whispered fearfully: "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

**

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

Janette looks back over the Festive Season at St. Augs and comments on who's doing what in the big wide world.

FRAN'S AMAZING TECHNICOLOR WEDDING CAKE.

No one quite knew what to wear for Fran and Faye's Wedding on Friday 11th December. Anoraks and crimplene trousers mingled with georgette frocks and Ascot style hats. It was also one of the coldest nights of the year and everyone had been invited. The brightly coloured wedding cake was visible to the many St. Mary's Way passers-by, courtesy of our wide screen HD windows - it was teatime after all and more than a few remarked '*what are they doin' in there now!*' Bring on the blinds!

Fran was in a cheeky little Buttons style outfit with a sparkling peacock blue jacket that DPT would have died for, while Faye positively glowed in a beautiful Gambian kaftan. Frankie, the bridesmaid, who normally graces St. Aug's events in long shorts, comfy sandals and a rucksack, had obviously met a Fairy Godmother on the Helensburgh train. She had been transformed into a Vanity Fair creation complete with spectacular hat. Not that this cramped her ebullience - she left halfway through the proceedings to appear at a gig in Helensburgh then returned to complete the remainder of her bridesmaidly duties. Though she's the first bridesmaid I've ever seen who entertained the company with a witty and well thought out speech followed by a tune on the saxophone! Whit a wumman!

The ceremony in the Church linked the two faiths of the happy couple and was appreciated by all who attended. The champagne buffet was a first for our new hall and it passed with flying colours. A lovely wedding, indeed.

THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF TBAG.

Top NHS chiefs are already losing sleep over TBag O'Neill's latest drain on their resources - she's been put on a Botox Programme! Yes, that's right, the miracle beauty treatment of the stars is being offered to her on the NHS and just in time for Spring when we lesser mortals have to suffice with a supermarket tin of Nivea.

There's only one problem - TBag's Botox is being administered, not to her fissog but to her behouchie! (Pause while Spell Check recovers!). How will she cope? Will a numb bum restrict her regular all day tea and gabbing sessions with Ghislaine? Who knows?

But she's looking on the bright side and haunting the rails of George at ASDA for a new thong style bikini- one fit for a superior posterior. And since Park Avenue is not quite ideal for such public exposure she's considering a foreign beach holiday. Think how good she'll feel when she's put through those new airport body scanners and hears the wolf whistles from the security staff. Roberta is taking her pre Christmas op back to the NHS for a better one now that she's heard about the TBag treatment!

WERE WE ALL 'CHRISTMASSED OUT'?

The Friends' Christmas Party was held in the new hall on 20th December and even with all the ingredients in place for a great Festive Do, the atmosphere did not quite match that of the 2008 party which had limited us to having all our happenings in the Church. Oh, this year we had the snow, the party food, Santa, a selection of games from Sharon, a large attendance, weans, carol singing and a' that and a' that! So how was it for you? Perhaps by the 20th December folks were getting fed up with all the nights out, parties, dinners, party food and Christmas sales to say nothing of the shopping mayhem and the telly reminding us incessantly what Christmas is all about. So next year perhaps we can try something different - lateral thinking hats will be worn to all Exec Meetings!

WAITING FOR THE BELLS AT THE MAD HATTER'S PARTY.

The tradition of sitting waiting for the New Year is taken seriously in Scotland but at the Hogmanay Party in the Rectory Fran challenged this custom and introduced party games to while away the weary hours of anticipation. She and Faye arrived at St Andrews Crescent armed with large bags of props to help us have a jolly good time. A large bag of assorted hats was produced and a game of Musi-

cal Hats attracted so much hysteria the neighbours must have thought Kenny's clocks were wrong and we had opened our champagne early. Oh yes - we had champagne! We might be getting skint but we're doing it in style! David Ansell was unforgettable in a mother of the bride concoction and even in his new serious role as sidesperson, for many the image refuses to go away. No wonder Fran's in charge of M.A.D! And we had Faye - the best first foot in Scotland who's probably still confused.com over being sent out into the street with a daud of black bun. Never mind, the long honeymoon in the Gambia will restore their sanity.

LOOKING FORWARD TO.....

Two special outings planned for February - one is to see the new 3D movie Avatar and the other is a visit to the Scottish Parliament. Avatar, noted for its excessive expenditure, is the story of strange illusory creatures flying around in a fantasy world. Oh, and you come out feeling dizzy! Let's hope Holyrood will not evoke a similar experience!

THE HAGGIS GOES TO HOLLYWOOD.

The spotlight was on President Obama for his first State of the Union speech last month and apparently Americans are not heralding his year in office as being the *'best thing since sliced breid'*. He is taking dramatic steps to redress the situation, one being the cancellation of the latest moon landing. However, another event has overshadowed all others in his pursuit of popularity - the Haggis, our *great chieftain o' the puddin race*, is being allowed back into the U.S.of A! This will delight American gourmets who are toasting the first *puddins* to arrive with a blast of *'Hail to the Chief'*. For our national dish the ban had been just *offal* and a real insult from the country that gave the world burgers and obesity. Now the St. Auggie's version, introduced recently by Jean and Connie, is all tinned up, tartanised and ready to go! *'Gaun yersel'* - as Rabbie would never have said!

WATCH OUT FOR THE 'JAMMIE DODGERS!'

Following Tesco's ban on pyjama wearing in its stores, the Scottish Episcopal Church is already discussing a similar ban on pyjama wearing at Church Services. A new canon has hastily been drawn up and in future, sides persons will have included in their duties, being vigilant when 'jammie dodgers' try to dodge into the pews for worship. The tell tale

signs are elasticated waists and crumpled over- long trouser legs specially designed to conceal the ubiquitous fluffy slippers. One new Bishop Elect, delighted that at last the Press were asking him for a comment said *'It's difficult enough to keep them awake during the sermon but if they come wearing pyjamas they'll sleep for the entire Eucharist'*. You have been warned!

THE MORNING AFTER.

After a quiet January spent mainly searching for salt, Friends burst into life again on the 31st with an evening of wee tartan treats called *'MacWinter Magic'*. It was just what the doctor ordered but on the 1st February we were informed of the following conversation between a *wee wumman* who'd attended and her anxious offspring..... Ring
Ring.....*Hello...Hello...*

Did you have a nice time at the Church Social, Mum?

'Oh, aye, great wee night! I'm exhausted - there was that much goin' on.'

Did you have nice wee scones and sandwiches?

'Naw, we had rolls on sausage wi' onions and brown sauce. And then we got clottie dumpling and tablet'

I see. No wonder they need all those slimming clubs down at St. Augustine's. Was the Minister there?

'Oh, aye, he was doin' the Raffle and we had such a laugh at the prizes. Somebody won a Pot Mit and somebody else won Pot Pourri - you say that as an 'O' you know! See what you learn down at that Church. Oh, and he was singing as well.'

That was lovely- did you have some nice old fashioned hymns?

No, it was 'The Jeelie Piece Song' - he knew a' the words. And then we heard this wonderful harp music.....it was a young boy called Ruraidh..with a clarsach.....'

Mother, are you sure you're feeling alright?

Never better - that MacWinter Magic's really done it for me!

Did everyone join in some community singing?

Oh aye, after Maggie found the 'Star o'Rabbie Burns' in the bin and TBag found the tune we gied it laldy. We even got up on our chairs for the chorus.'

Mother, what about your bad knees?

Och, I had rested them during the Tartan Bingo session - oh, and I won two Scotch Pies so you can come for your tea the night.'

Were there any good singers at the social?

Aye, Ghislaine and Ricky were brilliant at 'Flower of Scotland' - we nearly raised the new roof and we

were all that emotional wi' Andy Murray and that! Oh, and before you go could I borrow a wee gauzy top and your biggest pair of flares for the Mamma Mia Night!..... Hello?.... Are you still there?

Mother, I don't think you should go out with Jessie and Esther again. Now, I'm just going to hang up and phone the Social Services - you need a place at that nice Day Centre and the quicker the better!

THE NEW PLAQUE

We've just heard that WDC has sufficient money to fund the new long expected plaque on the front of St. Augustine's. The plaque will read 'ST.AUGUSTINE'S SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH'. Unfortunately there is insufficient room to add 'Soup and Toasties £1.60.'

THE NEW RECTORY.

The address for our new West End acquisition will be 54 Helenslee Crescent. Consideration was given to awarding it a name but 'Leak House', the most apt was too similar to the Charles Dicken's novel of 1852.

AND ONWARDS INTO SPRING.

Looking forward to Gas and Electricity Bills, Lent and a plethora of Valentines? Aye, that'll be right! Back next month on this page -don't miss it - you could be on it!

Janette

EMU agreement signed by church leaders

A unique partnership between the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church in Scotland was sealed by Church Leaders at a special service on Saturday 23 January at St Ninian's Episcopal Cathedral, Perth.

In signing the agreement, the Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church said "I am delighted to take part in the signing of this Agreement. Our General Synod has whole-heartedly affirmed and welcomed this developing relationship with our partner churches.

"Many relations of this kind are aspirational in character. What makes this relationship so encouraging

is that it is rooted in work which we already share in training and mission development. We look forward to a further sharing of resources and ministry as together we address the mission challenges of our times."

Joining Bishop David in the signing of the Agreement was the Rev Lily Twist, Chair of the Methodist Church in Scotland and Rev John Humphreys, Moderator of the United Reformed Church, National Synod of Scotland.

The new partnership will enable closer working at all levels of the churches, sharing of resources and education and development opportunities for clergy and congregations. It will continue to strengthen the way Christian churches work with one another across Scotland.

Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney challenges makers of Buckfast

The Rt Rev Dr Bob Gillies, Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney, contributed to the BBC One programme BBC Scotland Investigates: The Buckfast Code and has received wide-spread media coverage in his challenge to the monks of Buckfast Abbey to consider the social consequences of the seriously damaging effects of Buckfast Tonic Wine, saying "it has got a very high caffeine content.

That means when too much is drunk the effect can cause a high level of over-excited anger. The combination of alcohol with caffeine stimulant is a powerful cocktail and in the case of Buckfast Tonic Wine is a major factor behind many a violent scene in Scotland's towns and cities.

"It saddens me that a Christian organisation is supporting a product that contributes to the misery to our nation. I very much doubt if St Benedict, the founder of the monastic rule of life to which the monks of Buckfast Abbey are committed, would approve."

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Holy Week 2010

Again, this year, we will be sharing Holy Week with our brothers and sisters from other churches in the town, with St Augustine's featuring quite prominently. It is important that we really get our teeth into this and support it this year, especially since the main services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, with Holy Saturday, of course, being in our building. Kenny is preaching at the URC Church in Glasgow Rd on Holy Monday, to mark the fact that EMU has taken place. (*See elsewhere in this Magazine*)

Here is the full programme:

March 29th - Holy Monday 7pm

Service in URC Church - Preacher, Revd Kenny Macaulay

Tuesday 30th March - Holy Tuesday 7pm

Service in the West Kirk - Preacher, Revd Danny Cheyne

Wed 31st March - Holy Wednesday 7pm

Service at Dalreoch UF Church - Preacher, Revd Charlie Cameron

Thursday April 1st - Maundy Thursday 7pm

Passover Supper and Eucharist of the Last Supper, Stripping of the Altar and Watch until Midnight.

Friday 2nd April - Good Friday

Procession of Crosses at 11am with open air service at Poundland at 12 noon.

2pm: The Last Hour - at St Augustine's

7pm: Sharing Communion and Reflection - Riverside

Saturday 3rd April - Holy Saturday 9pm

Easter Ceremonies including the Lighting of the New Fire - St Augustine's.

Easter Day 7pm

Service of Praise in Riverside. (No preachin' - just Singin'!)

Diocesan Synod

This year's Synod meets on Saturday 27th February. Please pray for Tim and Kenny as they represent you, and of course for Gregor, our Bishop elect!

Vestry

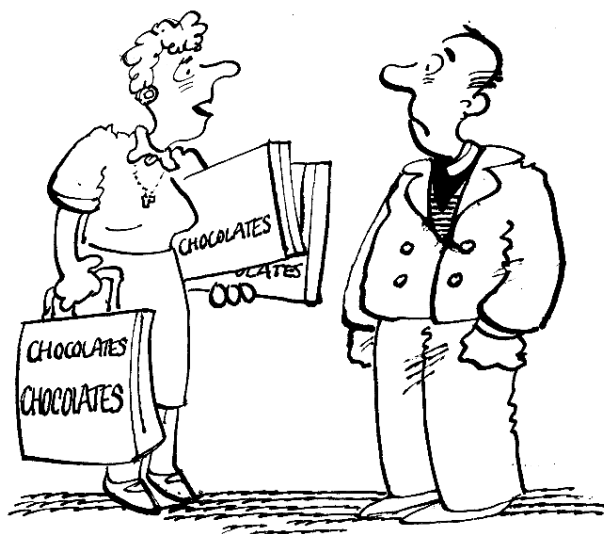
The meeting due to take place on Tuesday 23rd February has had to be postponed. If we can meet quickly after the 11am Service on Feb 21st, we can set a new date.

Visit from America!

Fr Andrew Faust and Brenda are popping across the pond for a March visit! They should be around Dumbar-ton from 14th-23rd March. We look forward to welcoming them!

Sinless!

Looking at the dreadful turnout at Ash Wednesday services, one can only assume that there is no sin in St Augustine's any more and therefore little need of repentance. I obviously am doing my job very well indeed!



I was going to give up chocolates for Lent - then I thought of all those poor Cadbury workers and their anxious shareholders...



I'm still not convinced that what works for Disneyland will work for us!

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Child Protection Officer: Barbara Barnes

The Goat at Christchurch Serrekunda!

