

Regular Weekly Services & Events

St Columba's, Bathgate

Sunday 11.15 a.m Sung Eucharist
(Second Sunday of Month is a Family Service)
Last Sunday of Month 6.30 p.m Choral Evensong
Monday 9.00 a.m Morning Prayer
Second Monday of Month 7.15 p.m Film Night
Wednesday 10.30 a.m Said Eucharist
(followed by coffee and natter)
First Wed. of Month 12 noon Community Lunch
Thursday 11 a.m 3C's - Cuppa, Chat & Company

St Peter's, Linlithgow

Sunday 9.30 a.m Sung Eucharist
First Sunday of Month 6 p.m Choral Evensong
Tuesday 10.30 a.m Said Eucharist
Thursday 9 a.m Morning Prayer
9.30am Sunday Youth Group Meets Monthly at Fenwicks

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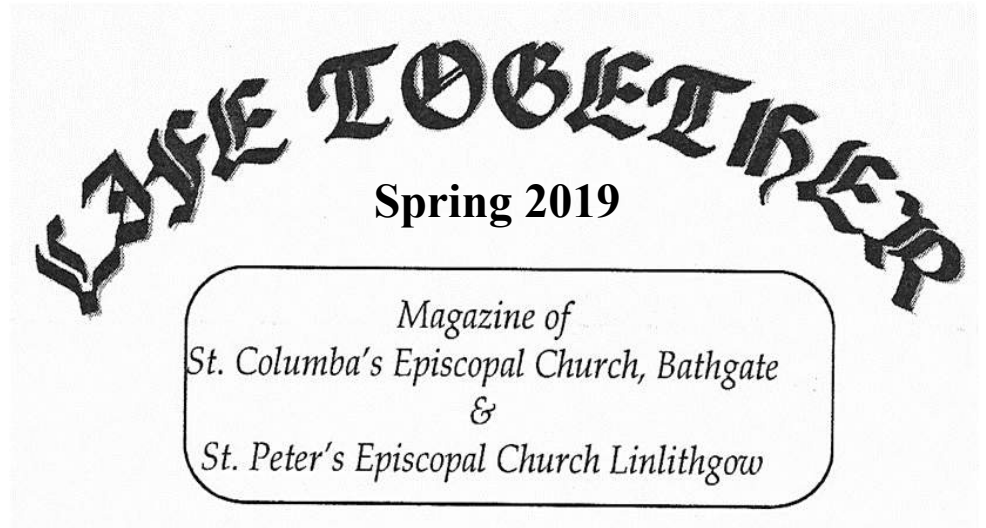
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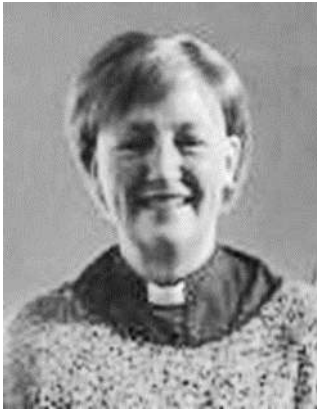
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Penny Lyons Candle Holder

*Rector
of
St Columba's & St Peter's*



Rev'd Christine Barclay

Phone: 01506 846069

www.stpeterslinlithgow.co.uk

www.stcolumbasbathgate.org.uk



Dear Friends,

I write this letter as we approach Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent realising that my last letter was written in the days approaching Advent; a reminder to me that our church life revolves around the liturgical seasons. And this was reinforced yesterday morning when St Peter's Sunday School had their first 'Play Church' experience, joining the rest of us for communion wearing the different chasubles, albs and with Bishop Fearghus resplendent in his Bishop's cope, mitre and crozier!

So much has happened since our last Life Together came out in early December, not least Christmas and Epiphany and the arrival of Play Church. All much anticipated and, I hope, enjoyed as we came together in a variety of services to celebrate, and give thanks for, the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

There was one event that very much shaped my Advent and Christmas, that of the very sudden death of our Lay Reader John Starr. He brought so much to our church life in the two years he was with us and I valued him highly as a colleague. As is often the case we don't realise all that someone is involved until they die and so it was with John. There are so many different fields of education, medicine and church life that are mourning his passing. Elsewhere in this issue is the eulogy for John from the Times, a remarkable read that makes me wonder how he fitted everything in and always managed to appear so 'laid back'. Our ongoing personal thoughts and prayers are so much appreciated by his wife Claire and their children. And I am so pleased to be able to tell you that Claire is going to lead a Quiet Day for us over the summer.

But before we get carried away with thoughts of summer we have Easter to look forward to; by the time you will be reading this letter Lent will be well underway. Lent is such a special time, time for reflecting through prayer and study – alone or with others, on where we are with Christ and where Christ is with us, a time for stripping off the mask and looking honestly at ourselves and our relationship with him. I like to take a walk in the sunny days of Lent, out in God's creation pondering such things... especially this year as life appears more complex than last year with issues that are totally out with my control. It is time to remember that with Easter the light of Christ has come into the darkness of our world and this give us hope for a future greater than we can ever imagine.

With Easter comes the announcement that love is present in the world and is more powerful than all of the dark and despairing moments that challenge us day by day.

I pray that this Easter will be rich in meaning for you as we rejoice in our risen Christ!

With love
Christine

A Prayer for Easter

Thanksgiving

*Risen Christ, for recognising you in the scriptures; for recognising
you in the breaking of the bread;*

for finding you in the stranger: we give you thanks.

*Risen Christ, for times of doubt and struggle, for times of confusion
and chaos,*

for times of wrestling for a blessing: we give you thanks.

*For thankfully you are present in bread and in battle, in darkness
and in doubt, in every corner of our lives, in every place in our
world, for you have gone before us.*

*Send us out with thankful hearts to live and work in your name and
to your glory.*

Play Church

As mentioned in my letter Play Church has arrived. This diocesan resource will be with our two churches until Pentecost. It has a child-sized altar, vestments, and all 'holy' things that we use in church. It is aimed at helping children have fun and explore their faith and I hope that by the time you are reading this many of you will have already seen it in action! Plans are afoot for us to make good use of it but having it with us for such a good period of time does afford us a wonderful opportunity to invite children's groups to come and play with it too. For other children to find out a little of our Scottish Episcopal tradition – the 'why we do what we do' and 'wear what we wear' questions. If you know of a group that might be interested please do approach them or, if you would rather, I can make contact. Rev Christine.

Social and fund raising events at St Peters see list on notice board in church or speak to Dot and the team

For Red doors Events see notice board at St Peter's or speak to Stewart Veitch

You could have your article or item here in the next magazine

Please send to Peter Lewis at PeteThePod@Gmail.com

Summer issue will be published at end of June 2019.

All articles to me by 16th June 2019 please.

The plan is for 4 magazines a year so the next issue will cover past 3 months (April to June 2019) and any notices for July to September 2019

THE ST PETER'S JOURNEY

A large audience packed the Longcroft Hall on Monday 10th February for an illustrated presentation entitled "The St Peter's Journey" – the voyage from its inception in 1928 to the present day, and its journey of faith through the building of its extension. At the invitation of St Ninian's Guild, members of many local churches gathered, including some ten members of St Peter's. Bruce took the listeners through the story of the church from its days as the St Peter's Mission, through the fund-raising for and building of the High Street Church in 1928 and then through the planning and creation of the new extension - a community facility for the whole town. Throughout, he stressed the journey of faith undertaken by everyone involved.



The large audience gathers in the Longcroft Hall.

Watched by St Ninian's Guild Chairperson, Rosina Johnston, Bruce begins his talk with the first of many slides.



St Columba's Gift to St Peter's

During the Feast of Candlemas service at St Columba's I dedicated a beautiful, and very symbolic oak candle holder for St Peter's. It was a gift for use in their new annex and refurbished church. It is a creation of Penny Lyons who worships at St Columba's. Made from several pieces of oak joined together, reminding us that none of us are alone, and we have more strength together with our fellow man, under God. Sections symbolically represent a chalice, a paten, the world and the Holy Trinity all sitting on a base of rings that represent the ripples on a pond into which a stone is thrown, reminding us that whatever we do in our lives we have an impact upon so many people. Rev Christine

From our Service Registers

Sunday 13th January 2019 Baptism of Austen Laing in St Columba's Church
Tuesday 15th January 2019 Funeral of Joan Esther Margaret Murrie

Ash Wednesday - after a day of practice, Rev Christine achieves perfection with her ash crosses!



Sermon for Lent 1 Sunday 10th March 2019.

God hates nothing God has made: powerful words from the Lent collect. And 'remember you are dust and to dust you shall return': equally powerful words from the Ash Wednesday service, words that I said to each person who came to have their foreheads marked with ash during our Ash Wednesday service, words that take us onto our Lenten journey. But what a bewildering paradox for us to contemplate – we are beloved of God, and we will die. And, the first truth does not prevent the second and the second does not cancel out the first.

In many ways, this is the same paradox that Jesus wrestles with in our Gospel reading for this first Sunday in Lent. At his baptism Jesus hears God speak those words of truth about his identity – he is God's Son, precious and beloved. But when, before he begins his ministry of preaching and healing, the Spirit leads him into the wilderness he has to face some powerful challenges to that truth. Jesus has to learn to experience love in the wilderness. He has to trust that he can be beloved and hungry, precious and insignificant, valued and vulnerable all at the same time. Jesus has to learn that God's care resides within his flesh and blood humanity; as it does within us.

As we know from this very familiar story the devil offers Jesus three opportunities to walk away - three opportunities to walk away for this essential lesson. Lessons that might have something to say to us as we enter into our 40 days journey towards Good Friday and onto the Glory of Easter. Might they be invitations to us to trust God's love in the barren places of our lives?

And just as the serpent in the Garden of Eden cast doubt on God's command to Adam and Eve, so here he does again with his 'ifs' to sow doubt and insecurity. Here in the wilderness the devil first tests Jesus' hunger – 'if you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread'. The temptation implying that God's beloved son should not be hungry....in the devil's economy unmet desire is an unnecessary privation, not an integral part of what it means to be human and in inviting Jesus to magically overcome his hunger the devil invites Jesus to deny the reality of the incarnation, to 'cheat' his way to satisfaction rather than waiting and taking notice of his hunger and leaning into God for lasting fulfilment. Some of us will have 'given up' something for Lent this year - chocolate, wine, social media perhaps, the goal being to sit with our hunger for whatever we have given up.

Questions of Faith

I have often talked of Faith as being blind. The absolute trust in God with no real answers. A wait and see sort of situation. "Believe in me and all will be revealed...EVENTUALLY...but you must trust in me implicitly" God seems to say when we are seeking answers beyond our comprehension. Since Johnny died I have struggled with what has become of him. I hope to see him again, I believe I will but how will I recognise him or him me. I watched the man I loved being cremated so if nothing of what I remembered is left what lies beyond?

ON Sunday Ian read from Corinthians chapter 15 verses 35-38 and 42-50. This has reassured me immeasurably. YES we will NOT be as NOW but WE WILL BE and of that we can be assured.

Margot.

Festivals being celebrated in May and June 2019

Tuesday 30th April – Mark the Evangelist

Wednesday 1st May – Apostles Philip and James

Tuesday 14th – Apostle Matthias

Thursday 30th Ascension Day. St Columba's @ 10.30am and St Peter's @ 7.30pm

Sunday 9th June – Pentecost

Wednesday 12th June – Abbot Columba

Sunday 16th June – Trinity Sunday

Sunday 23rd June – Birth of John the Baptist

Sunday 30th June – Apostles Peter and Paul

Forthcoming Attractions at St. Columba's

Have you been to a Barbershop recently?

Then get yourself along to St Columba's on Friday 3rd May

When the 'SWEET HARMONY' Barbershop Singers will be entertaining us with an evening of song and light humour.

tickets are £7.50 and include a light supper. B.Y.O.B.

Get your Tickets from Duncan Sinnet.

My Day

I often rise about half past eight
to most of you that is quite late
Sometimes I even rise at nine
depends if I am feeling fine

If nightmares have invaded sleep
my cosy place i wish to keep
If I've slept well I greet the day
and think I will go out to play

first it's my doggy I have to feed
she loves her brekkie yes indeed
then to the garden for a wee
all this before I make my tea

If no appointments put on TV
Jeremy Vine I like to see
with coffee toast and I take my seat
watch the show as I do eat

eleven fifteen the show is done
and now the shock for every one
in Jammies still I must confess
and so I go upstairs to dress

some days I meet a friend in town
I get the little L1 down
on Thursdays daughter she comes
through
that day she finishes at two

we lunch and shop then back for tea
she then takes Lucy out for me
she can give Lucy a good run
a walk with her much better fun

somedays are lazy and lonely so
these days I have nowhere to go
I laze about and contemplate
about my rather aimless state

I try to find things to fill my day
but cannot always find a way
however coping ok am I

I don't always succeed but still I try.

Margot.

Can we still hunger for it and still live? Can we desire something and still flourish without it? Who and where is God when we are famished for whatever it is we long for: friendship, meaning in life? It can be very hard, but this is the invitation, the invitation to really know that we can be loved and hungry at the same time, we can hope and hurt at the same time. And most of all we can trust that when God nourishes us it will be authentic; it may not be the food we choose for ourselves but it will feed us and through us if we learn to share...it will feed the world.

The devil then tempts Jesus' ego. After showing Jesus all the kingdoms of the world' the devil promises him glory and authority: 'it will all be yours' he says – fame, recognition, power – a kingdom to end all kingdoms, here and now. The implication being that God's beloved need not labour in obscurity – to be God's child is to be centre stage, up front, admired, applauded and envied, that a God who really loves us would never abandon us to a modest life, lived in what the world considers insignificance.

This test reveals the real question at the heart of all temptation – who is it that we trust and obey? As Saint Theresa of Avila explained 'the more we see that any actions springs not from the motive of obedience, the more evident it is that it is a temptation of the enemy'. It is an understatement I think to say that Christians have an uneasy relationship with power; the history of the Church is full of accounts of ugly fallouts over power, fame, and authority gone wrong. Susan Howatch's powerful 'Starbridge' novels of the Church of England in 50', 60' and 70's of last century illustrate this so well. So the question for us is how important is it for us to be noticed, praised, liked? Can we trust that God sees us even when the powers-that-be don't? Can we live as God's beloved children thriving in quiet places, humble places? For the uncomfortable truth about Christian power is that it resides in weakness; Jesus is lifted up, but he is lifted up on a cross.

The devils third temptation challenges Jesus' vulnerability. The devil promises that 'God will command his angels concerning you, to protect you' 'on their hands they will bear you up, so that will not dash your foot against a stone'. The implication being that if we are beloved of God, then God will keep us safe. Safe from pain and harm, safe from death. This is such an enticing lie for it feeds right into our deepest fears about what it means to be human in a broken and fragile world.

Don't we so much want to believe that we can use our belovedness as an impenetrable shield that God will come to our rescue swiftly if we just believe hard enough? No, the reality is, if the cross, that Jesus chose, teaches us anything it teaches us that God's precious children still hurt, still die. And, that we are loved in our vulnerability not out of it.

So here we stand at the start of this Lent with three temptations and three invitations. What shall we do with them? In the wilderness the devil offers Jesus a clever inversion of these questions 'can you be fully human? Can you exercise restraint, abdicate power, accept danger. Can you bear what it means to be mortal?' Jesus chose the mundane, the invisible and the risky.

The gospel tells us that Jesus didn't choose to enter the wilderness, the Spirit lead him there. And he chose to stay until the work of the wilderness was over. Very few of us would choose to enter the wilderness either, we don't volunteer for hurt and pain, for loss, for danger. But the wilderness happens; whether it comes in the guise of a hospital waiting room, a turbulent relationship, a sudden loss. Wilderness happens, unbidden and unwelcome; it arrives at our doorstep.....

And yes, we might ponder and ask the question - does it mean that God wants us to suffer? I don't think so. Does it mean that God can redeem even the most barren periods of our lives, if we choose to stay and hold our nerve, does it mean that our deserts can become holy even when they remain dangers? Yes I do.

So, in this season of Lent we are invited to follow Jesus into the wilderness, to stay and look temptations in the eye. Taking time to recognise and confess the allure of the 'one click' on Amazon for something we don't really need. But Lent is much more. Lent is a period of time to explore who we are and whose we are. Lent is not a time to do penance for being human; but it is a time to embrace the paradox of what it means to be human. To be human and hungry, to be human and vulnerable and to be human and beloved. For God hates nothing God has made.

And may God is God's great love grant us a holy and meaningful Lent.

Protected from the rain, the bonfire awaits.

We now await better conditions so that garden work parties can recommence. The first of these will probably be in March - weather permitting – when we will sand and repaint the “railway benches”, lay gravel on all muddy paths, level the area beside the shed and prepare it for “Christine’s Labyrinth”. The next step will be to order a ton of small gravel and some 100 ‘stepping stones’ to complete the project. This will probably take place in late April/early May.



May 2018: The area now ear-marked for the labyrinth.

I have one final suggestion. What about inviting members of the congregation to bring along a plant which could be placed in the garden in memory of a departed, loved one. These could be placed in the lower terraces, around the Labyrinth or up in the “Children’s Area”. Some people will have an idea of what plant has memories for them – just make sure that it will thrive in our quite shaded area. Others might want to bring along a colourful shrub such as an azalea, fuchsia or skimmia. Plants in the top Wildlife Garden might include bee-loving shrubs such as buddleia, golden rod, honeysuckle or alyssum. Some might like to put in a shrub with a Biblical connection such as hyssop (Leviticus 14.52), sage (Exodus 37.17), Rue (Luke 11.42) or anemone (Matthew 6.28). If you want any more ideas just speak to Corinne.



Do let me know what you think of the idea. If it is thought to be appropriate, perhaps we could have a “Bring Along a Plant Day” on Saturday, May 4th. Compost and fertiliser might also be donated to aid growth so that every Sunday we could look out on our garden - and remember.

NOW



THEN

ST PETER'S GARDEN

*June
2018*



*January
2019*

Our garden has come a long way! Winter has occasioned a temporary lull in our plan to coax our back garden rig into shape but a lot has been done over the last few months. All the plants which were salvaged from the Annet House Garden have been planted in the terraced area – and we now await the Spring to see what will appear. Several other plants and shrubs have been added to the planting scheme. Corinne's bulbs have been planted in tubs and around the garden, including on the slope leading up to the wildlife garden. The top area has been levelled, a compost heap created, habitats prepared for wildlife, an insect house installed and several bird feeders, bird nesting boxes and a bird table have been put in place.

On the lower levels, Andrew has worked incredibly hard erecting hand-rails alongside all stepped access points. A fence has been constructed between our rig and next door's so that our area is secure for any children exploring the area. The stone wall beneath it has been repaired and heightened. All of the new timber has been painted – although a second coat is required. The "Memorial Garden" has been tidied, new slate added and filled planters installed.

The Memorial Garden

It has been good to see work on our adjoining rig to the east where new resident Colin and his father-in-law, Lloyd, have put in hours of work. We had agreed with them and Mr Tomolillo that we would clear the lower part of the shared rig and sow it with wild flower seed. However, it would seem as if the remaining flat above The Golden Chip will be sold and it is expected that with the purchase will go the remaining strip of land. We await developments.

Meanwhile, the branches which fell in an Autumn storm and lots of other woody material has been gathered together and is now awaiting a bonfire.



St Columba's Thrift Shop

St Columba's rented the Thrift shop in George Street (the pedestrian area) in Bathgate for a week this year as we have for many years past. It is a fairly big commitment but it does add a useful contribution to our income. We had a successful week. The total taken was **£1413.84**. This is a wonderful result which could not have been achieved except through the hard work of a very devoted team. In all ten people contributed their time to selling, some of them almost every day. Without them we could not have run the shop but it made a big demand on their time. We were really grateful to those who came in once or twice to give us a respite. The team for setting up and taking down was also fairly small. There were ten of us to set up, which sounds a lot, but there is a great amount of work to be done, unpacking bags and arranging their contents as advantageously as possible in rather too small a space. We had eight people helping to take down enough but again none too many, since everything in the shop has to be packed into bags and taken to various different destinations, including the refuse collection centre (2 car trips), Cash for Clothes (4 car trips for a welcome £62.00 addition to our takings) charity shops (2 trips but a lot more on foot) and the Church. All this adds up to a really massive thank-you to all those involved including some who are not regular members of the congregation but who offered to help out.

And of course a huge thank-you also to all donors, including several very generous contributors from St Peter's. We had a really good lot of stuff this year and we noticeably sold the best of it, both bric-a-brac and clothes. Our shoppers want a bargain but they are definitely discriminating. They are also often generous if they can afford it: we had a number of people who paid a little more than we asked because we were a good cause. And we had a number of people who were very happy – one prospective granny who was over the moon at the idea of the first grandchild spent over £30.00 and was thrilled.

It was nice that Liz and Gordon Beetham were able to take some of the better left over items for St Peter's sale.

I have booked the shop for next year for February 19 to 26th (already the only slot available around that time). I hope we can get enough helpers to run it.

Carola Small

A MAN CALLED JOHN.



The fine silver thread which bound John Starr on a dark and wet Sunday morning, to a sun-filled morning on Iona and to us all in St Columba's and St Peter's was broken on the night of 8th December when he died so suddenly and far too soon. A sparkling, gleaming star indeed was snuffed out that night, but the memory of that amazing man will shine brightly for those who had the privilege of knowing and walking with John for even a short while.

A dark anorak, glasses perched on the end of his nose, hair wind-blown, shoulders hunched sitting in the middle of the church was our first meeting with John. Who was this we asked ourselves especially when at the post service meeting, the first to discuss with the congregation the possibility of an extension, he had much to say in that quiet and gentle voice which we all came to know. He worked his way into our hearts and minds, teaching us not only matters of theology at various Lent and Advent courses, but things about life, about compassion, about acceptance, about seeing the person beneath their outer shells of smart clothes, or broken and lost spirits.

For me, my most precious memory of John is of the time we shared with him and others on Iona. A morning filled with the warm, golden glow of the sun shining into the sitting room of Bishop's House and John in an armchair with a little boy on his knee, a child who had come along with his parents for a quick peek into the house and found us all gathered contentedly in the room. This little boy had clambered onto John's knee and there he sat, captivated by the quiet, sleepy smile of this stranger who had put aside all other thoughts for that moment and was giving all of his attention to the small body on his lap.

John had that ability to make everyone feel important, every one of us a work of God's art, even when hidden from the world behind the dark clouds of dementia, lost but still worthy of love and respect. He shall never be forgotten, a humble man, whose loss has dimmed the bright smile of his beloved wife Claire, but which in time will surely return as she remembers all that she, her family and friends shared with this very special man.

Jane.

After Church dilemma.

After being deposited from Church by Ian Wallace on Sunday I decided to take Lucy out immediately before I settled down for the afternoon. Although a pleasant enough day it was very windy so I zipped my jacket up as high as it could go and set off for the park. Returning home I gave Lucy her usual drink of water and a treat, took off my boots and went to remove my jacket. OH DEAR, the zip had stuck and I could not budge it. HEEEEEEELP! my daughter came on the phone and was howling with laughter at my trapped state offering such comfort as going to bed in my jacket etc. Absolutely no amount of coaxing, pulling or wiggling would move the offending zip so what did I do next?. Very sheepishly I went next door to my neighbour who has offered to help me in any way since Johnny died. I rang the bell and Susan answered with an anxious expression. I put on my most desperate face and said I needed help before laughing and explaining my predicament. Susan soon very expertly released me from my prison and I went home a happy and grateful Bunny.

Margot.

St Michaels RC Ladies' Club visit to St. Peters.

Tonight I visited St. Peters as a member of St. Michael's RC Ladies club in order to see around our lovely new extension and hear a bit about the history of our unique wee church. St. Michael's provided the goodies and Christine Jane and Ian provided the rest. Christine explained how the extension bore fruit, she and Jane recited a beautiful poem (can't remember by whom) and Ian eloquently delivered a wonderful explanation of Play Church. The evening was rounded up with prayers read out by six members of the group and the sending out of light to the world in the form of lighting and extinguishing candles. It was a lovely evening, well attended and thoroughly appreciated. True ecumenical spirit shining through once more

Please get involved, in any of the above, in whatever way you can. Every small action we take is a step towards preserving our lovely planet, something sorely needed in this day and age.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fact 1: St Ninian's Craigmalen and St Michael's Parish Church in Linlithgow are also eco churches.

St Ninian's won a Gold Award in 2018, so we have something to aim for ourselves!

Fact 2: Corinne and Yasmine sowed some dwarf lavender seeds in mid February, and within a week they had germinated!! (we did sow them in the correct phase of the moon, according to the lunar calendar).

By the time you read this, our little seedlings will be growing strongly, and well on the way to being planted out in the back garden - watch this space!

Corinne

Margot's Moments

Hi there, here we are after the Festive break and probably feeling a little flat although there have been a few Church activities to get us going for the New Year. The Burn's Supper went down a treat as did the Valentine lunch although I was unable to attend either. Now that's not strictly true, I did indeed set out on Valentine's day to meet a friend whom I had promised to treat to lunch in our Church. Walking along the road she said how much she was looking forward to it and that she was hungry. Good beginning thought I however when asked what the soup was and on learning it was Tomato she exclaimed in horror that she could not tolerate Tomato soup. The rest of the menu on offer did not appeal either so we ended up in Fenwicks which meant my reasonably priced treat turned out to be a bit more pricey. Still can't please everyone. p.s. I Love Tomato soup.

The Name Game for St Peter's Annex

Having now enjoyed our lovely new spacious annex for just under a year - is it *THAT* long I hear you say! Yes, time goes swiftly by when you're really enjoying yourself doesn't it!! – we now have to think of a suitable name for 'it'. So, we are looking for that certain something to a name that describes our beautiful new space perfectly!

To that end, every single one of us, adults and children, from the oldest to the youngest, can enter our 'Name Our Space' event!

All you have to do is think about our new annex, and imagine what you would like it to be called. We have already had a couple of imaginative names given to us, but these names will simply be added to the list.

The requirement is just for a *suitable* sort of name, something that describes our wonderful room, something we can all live with and be proud of. All names will be considered very carefully!

What to do:

When you've thought of a name, write it on a piece of paper, put your name on the back and bring to church. There will be a box for you to put your entry in, and all these entries will be judged by an impartial party!! There isn't as yet a closing date for entries, but please **bring your suggestion as soon as possible**, to avoid disappointment!

Good Luck!

THE BIG SING - CHANGE OF DATE - NOW 15th JUNE, 10.30-17.00 You may have heard me mention at Synod (or other event) that everyone is invited to a BIG SING Diocesan event at the Cathedral, 10.30am gathering for an 11am start.

Singers and choirs can come together for a few hours on a Saturday in June to sing and prepare for a special evensong, and those not singing are also invited to join us in the afternoon for refreshments and the service at 4pm. Originally this was to be on 1st June, but PLEASE NOTE THE DATE HAS HAD TO CHANGE TO 15th JUNE. Sorry for any inconvenience caused. More details and advertising will be available soon.... But for now, SAVE THE DATE!

Jim
Jim Adamson

ST PETER'S BURNS SUPPER 2019

Sixty people packed into St Peter's on January 25th – the 260th anniversary of the birth of Scotland's national bard, Robert Burns. It turned out to be a night to remember and began with a lusty chorus of the specially written song, "St Peter's Address to the Haggis". Soon, the actual object of desire arrived: 58 haggis suppers piped in from our next-door neighbour's premises, "The Golden Chip". The "Great Chieftain" was poetically greeted by Struan Duncan while his younger brother Ruaridh delivered the Selkirk Grace.

There were five Poosie Nancies – the traditional name given to waitresses at such gatherings, named after the woman who served Burns in a Mauchline tavern. Poosie Nancy was actually called Agnes Gibson but her nickname arose from the hairy whiskers around her mouth! All of *our* servers were smooth-faced: Jane and Yasmine Ramsay (who also carried in the haggis), Dot, Rachel and Lauren Jamieson. Thanks to Dot and her granddaughters platters of cheese and biscuits were then distributed and the contents devoured.

The meal over, Judy Barker led the enthusiastic audience in "Ye Banks and Braes" before the main tribute of the night, the "Immortal Memory" which was delivered by Hector Woodhouse, a former Provost of Linlithgow. His couthy and often amusing homage met with a rapturous reception and the audience's enjoyment continued with songs from Ali Veitch (accompanied by Stewart) and Ruth Duncan (accompanied by Alan).

The "Toast to the Lassies" was given in "different" form by Bruce Jamieson, dressed and acting like a lawyer trying to prove that women were guilty - of everything. Luckily his light-hearted approach was taken in good heart and he certainly got his come-uppance in a beautifully delivered reply by "Learned Counsel" Katie Petersen.



Eco Congregation at St Peter's

In this issue of the magazine there will be no 'Tips saving energy in the home'.

Instead, here is an update on how St Peter's is getting on in the eco congregation movement.



on

First, a bit of history.

St Peter's was first set up as an eco church by Philip Blackledge, helped by Jenny Hammond and myself. After Pip left, Paul Goldfinch kept things ticking over, in the hope that one day interest would be revived, and recently I have been tagging along. We are both hoping however that others will come on board, and if this is something you believe matters, please get in touch.

So what has been happening so far?

1. You will have noticed that a sheet has appeared on the notice board in church, under the heading 'Eco Congregation'. See how many boxes you can tick off!

Being an eco congregation is not just for when we attend church, it is also for individuals to practise in their own homes.

2. At the latest meeting of the West Lothian and Falkirk (Eco Congregation) group, the following events were decided for 2019.

- Saturday 30th March: Annual gathering in Dundee
- Saturday 11th May: Early bird (7am) dawn chorus in Torphichen, followed by breakfast
- September: Cascade workshop (date tba)
- November: Visit to St Peter's extension and ideas swop (date tba)

These are open to all, speak to Paul if you are interested in attending.

3. In St Peter's there will be recycling bins appearing in the extension. Please use these to put in clean, dry paper, card, plastic bottles, metal cans and glass bottles. They will be taken away by volunteers for recycling. Better still, please take any recyclables home and put in your own blue bin!

4. Opportunities for work in the garden, especially planting activities, are coming up soon, with the return of better weather - Bruce has this in hand!

We aim to make the garden as wildlife friendly as possible, in the spirit of 'caring for God's creation', whilst creating an attractive, colourful and peaceful space, a 'place to meet God and to appreciate the beauty of the earth'.

Lunch for the two congregations at the Torphichen Inn

Blue Monday (21st January) is supposed to be the most depressing day of the year but it certainly was not that for a group of people from St Columba's and St Peter's who met for lunch that day at the Torphichen Inn. It was quite a large group. When we first suggested to the Innkeeper, Kenny, that he might like to lay on lunch for us on a day when the Inn is normally closed, we suggested that perhaps 10 or 12 people would come. In fact there were 42! Kenny was delighted and we had a great time. The lunch was excellent with a good choice of dishes and up to three courses, and we had some fun entertainment - poems, especially from Sandra Dobson, stories from Gwyneth Young and Della Marshall, songs and music provided by Richard Drysdale-Wilson and his friend John Wilkinson on guitar and drums and some Scottish music from Gwyneth and Richard who had never played together before but certainly sounded as if they had, and who produced some very professional sounding and thoroughly enjoyable entertainment. Everyone went home with a smile on their face. We must try to do it again next year.

Carola



The traditional, and often hilarious, Burns raffle followed with prizes ranging from the bellows which the Devil used to fan the fires of Hell to a Burns Toby jug to an excellent, tin-boxed bottle of malt whisky donated by David Lovelock.

The whole event was efficiently “broadcast” by sound engineer John Barker and the unforgettable evening ended with the singing of more Burns songs and then the evergreen Auld Lang Syne. As Chairperson Rev Christine later said, the sight of a packed audience of St Peter's members and friends all joining hands in fellowship and harmony brought a wonderful, warm feeling – one that she wished could be bottled and sent around the world.

That is the secret of a good Burns night – along with the heartfelt desire that “man tae man the world o'er could brothers be, for a. that!”



The Sunday Club at St Columba's is in full swing for the term. We began the year by looking for a sense of wonder in the Lords Prayer, exploring its meaning by playing games, and eating pancakes! This month Ayla and Lucy were thinking about Love and made these wonderful 'stained glass' hearts which they shared with the congregation at the end of the service.

Our young people have also been enjoying taking part in Family services, sharing readings and prayers with us and even having their faces painted!

We are looking forward to having lots of fun with Play Church when it comes to our churches in the coming months. The kids at St Columba's are thinking about how they are going to use it and already have an idea of where it's going to go when it's in our church!

Our Sunday Club meets on the last Sunday of the month and all are welcome.

Rachel xx

Pictures removed for WEB publication

Yummy applesauce cake

On the second Sunday in Advent in St Peter's, there was homemade cake at coffee time. It seemed to go some way to cheer people up after the shocking announcement and sadness of John Starr's sudden death. (*Note: this article was supposed to have appeared in the December issue.*)

A couple of people asked me for the recipe (it really is yummy!).

For those of you lucky enough to still have a copy of St Peter's first recipe book, entitled "**From the pot and the pen - Favourite recipes and original verse**", you will find it under Applesauce cake, a recipe given by Judith Mylne (who has long since moved away from Linlithgow).

For everyone else, I have copied the recipe out below, as it was written, and added my comments in italics.

It's a great way to use up a glut of apples as the one we had this year!

Corinne Anderson

This is a really moist, spicy cake, easy to make, usually a firm favourite and a little bit different.

Cream together: 8oz (225g) soft margarine and 8oz (225g) castor sugar. Beat up 2 large or 3 small eggs and add 8oz (225g) sieved stewed apple. Mix this into the creamed margarine and sugar.

Sieve together: Dry ingredients

8oz wholemeal self raising flour (*note from Corinne I used white flour*)

1 teaspoonful ground cloves

1 teaspoonful ground nutmeg (*I used allspice*)

1 teaspoonful cinnamon

1 teaspoonful salt (*I omitted this*)

8oz sultanas (*I used half sultanas and half raisins*)

Add the dry ingredients to the rest of the mixture and stir thoroughly to combine.

Put the mixture in a rectangular 10 x 8 inch tin and cook in a pre-heated oven at 170 C, 340 F, Gas Mark 3 for about 45 minutes.

Turn out onto a wire tray with top of cake uppermost and, whilst still hot, sprinkle it with granulated sugar and then drizzle lemon juice over the sugar to moisten it.

Allow to cool before cutting.

Corinne