

THE SIGN

FEBRUARY 2017

ST CUTHBERT'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH COLINTON

St Cuthbert's endeavours to be a community in which all are encouraged to participate in worshipping God and serving the wider community. It welcomes those who are doubters and sceptics as well as those who are committed in faith, and has a particular concern for those who have been hurt by their experiences of life.

THE SIGN

There are still temporary arrangements in place for producing the SIGN and a special thanks goes to Elspeth Miller and John Peacock for giving extra time to ensure it is printed and distributed as usual.

Some interest has been shown in the possibility of an editorial team but we now urgently need to find some who would like to gather and collate articles and information, and lead the team so that that our magazine continues into the future. If you think this is a task you would enjoy please speak to one of the wardens.

Thank you to everyone who is continuing to provide content about activities and events and of course the ongoing rotas.

From our Interim Pastor

Fred Tomlinson

Dear Friends

“Wad some pow’r the giftie gie us, tae see oursel’es as ithers see us”. Robert Burns



I write this just a few days before Burns night and it seems to me that, while the year is still new, we might heed his words above. They come from his poem “To a Louse” and the story at its heart is very simple. A woman sits near the front of church and hears her neighbours commenting about her hairstyle. She is sure they are speaking compliments, but in fact they’ve just spotted a louse sitting proudly atop her curls! If one she could “see herself as others see her”.

Burns is speaking out against pride, but I feel his words could just as easily apply to those of us who are drawn to lower ourselves in our own eyes, when in fact others think highly of us.

The apostle Paul realised that how we see ourselves is very important – the self-portrait we carry round with us every day, the picture we try to paint of ourselves, the image we want other people to see. We may even in our deeper moments recognise that some parts of our self-portrait we haven’t painted for ourselves – we are conforming to what other people – family, teachers, colleagues, friends, think of us.

It follows too that sometimes we in turn paint portraits of what others ought or ought not to be like, and that this can colour our lives and theirs.

Paul writes: *From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view.....if anyone is in Christ, he/she is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come.* Paul invites us then to see ourselves as reborn in the image of Christ each day.

Perhaps, in order to get a proper perspective on ourselves, we should paraphrase Burns thus: ***“Wad some pow’r the giftie gie us, tae see oursel’s as God sees us”.***

Fred

SARAH'S VIEW

Reflections on Time'

As I write this it is not even mid-January, so I still feel able to say 'A happy and blessed New Year!' to all of our readers. In my experience the start of a new year often prompts thoughts about time – of the past, as well as of the future. It is as if we become even more aware of the implications of time's vanishing quality. Perhaps this came to me more strongly this new year as Willie and I spent almost a week at Kilmartin Glen near Lochgilphead, an area rich in archaeological remains - stone circles, burial cairns, cup and ring marks. One of the places we visited was Achnabreck, notable for its Neolithic rock art – indeed, home to some of the best examples in Scotland. And the spirals carved in the rock for which it is famous are mirrored in similar examples found elsewhere in Europe... Mystery upon mystery. Even experts can only guess at the significance of this rock art for those who carved it. What did they want to express through these markings in the rock? What can it say to us now? For me, it made me think about perceptions of time. Generally and understandably, our own present reality – with its joys and sufferings – form 'our world' and the world out of which we act, think, and speak. Yet places like Kilmartin remind us that time is very long indeed, and that we (individually, but also as nations, communities and families), tread on this earth but very briefly. And so what are the implications of that? Well, I'm reminded of this story told to me by a friend: A girl was sitting on a bus and at the next stop a loud and grumpy woman got on and sat by her. The girl was squeezed in her seat and bumped by the lady's numerous bags. When the lady eventually got off, another passenger asked the girl why she had not spoken up, or said something. The girl responded with a smile: 'It's not necessary to be rude or argue over something so insignificant, the journey together is so short.' I wonder how 2017 would be if we were to remember that our journey together here *is* so short? Wouldn't futile arguments, not forgiving others, fault-finding, and discontentment, seem a waste of time?

Thoughts to Ponder

As I prepare these notes during Advent and Christmas I am reminded of the uncertain and challenged place of Christianity in our world. On the one hand, the photograph of the nun on the front page of the Times on 12th December brought home the bewilderment at the bomb attack on the Coptic Church and its community in Cairo, one part of the conflict in the Middle East. On 29th December in Scotland, the Times carried the headline “Take religion out of classroom; school should not be a place of worship, poll shows.” The poll was part of the on-going debate about religious observance in non-denominational schools. On the other hand over Christmas many churches were packed with worshippers. On Christmas Eve Charles Moore contributed to the Daily Telegraph a thoughtful article entitled “As at the first Christmas, the faith today needs help against its persecutors”. He proposed “a more sympathetic approach in modern Western political culture to Christianity and to the fate of its adherents wherever their faith is contested.” He argued that this is essential in ensuring religious freedom and because Christianity, along with ancient Greece and Rome, is one of the principal building blocks of our culture. A very positive note was sounded by Cardinal Vincent Nichols in the same issue of the Daily Telegraph in his article “Faith is a gift we can use to build a better world.” He reported on the coming together of the religious leaders of Israel and Palestine to create a “foundation for peace built upon the common ground and imperatives of their religious beliefs.” Nichols went on to outline how the precious and positive resources of faith could help to heal the divisions in Britain. Through what means and to what extent the Church maintains and develops its place in society is a complex question and one which we should ponder particularly as the number of active adherents decreases and the challenges strengthen.

Earlier in 2016, I chanced upon a fascinating book, which explored this theme in the first four centuries of Christianity: “Coming out Christian in the Roman World; how the followers of Jesus made a place in Caesar’s Empire” by Douglas Boin. (Bloomsbury Press, 2015.) Particularly in the period to and immediately after 313 A.D., when religious freedom was granted, Boin finds many followers of Jesus leading hyphenated lives: they quietly followed Jesus’ teachings whilst living as loyal Roman citizens. Other followers took a more aggressive approach and walked the road to martyrdom. One example he describes concerned a group of Roman soldiers in 212 A.D., some of whom were Christians: in recognition of their outstanding service the Emperor bestowed upon

them laurel crowns. All the Christian soldiers except one were prepared to wear these, the exception could not because in his view laurel leaves were unacceptable as they were also used to decorate statues of gods such as Apollo. He was imprisoned. As can be inferred from this example, what it meant to be a follower, and how followers were identified were much debated throughout this period.

For us the three hundred years after Jesus' death and indeed up to the fifth century are crucial. So much that we accept was put in place: the New Testament Gospels were written and accepted, replacing an oral tradition; doctrines and creeds formulated; organisation created; and churches replaced houses as places of worship. Pondering upon and exploring this period is important – Boin provides many insights and pointers.

David Ferro, 3rd January 2017.

THE REITH LECTURES

This year's lectures by Professor Kwame Anthony Appiah were on the subject of Identity. His four areas of concern were Creed, Country, Colour and Culture. To summarise even one of these would be a daunting task, and the following is an attempt to pick out the salient points of the first lecture.

We are shaped by many factors such as nationality, gender, class, race and religion, all being expressions of our identity; but are we clear about our identity or might we be mistaken. Is religious identity explained simply by such words as “faith, credo and beliefs”?

Appiah sees all religions as having three dimensions: what we do – i.e. practice, who we do it with – i.e. community or fellowship, and there are also beliefs. (If you believe in the articles of faith which define a Jew, does this make you a Jew?)

Priests and scholars often want to insist that doctrine, of which after all they are the masters, drives practice forms of worship, tradition, social regulation. But practice changes over time, sometimes slowly, sometimes swiftly, and changed practice can lead to changed beliefs. Consider, for example, that while St. Paul held on to Judaism he did not require Christians to do so; references in the Bible to

genocide, infanticide, slavery, stoning of adulterers to death are not acceptable; the place of women in the church has been transformed.

To quote a few lines verbatim:”..if scriptures were not subject to interpretation – and thus reinterpretation – they wouldn’t continue to guide people over long centuries. When it comes to their survival their openness is not a bug, but a feature. A burden, perhaps, but also a blessing.

This feature cuts in various directions. Because among the most vehement of scriptural determinists are fundamentalists, consumed with dragging others into a single version of one of the great religious traditions, these movements whether Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish or Moslem – all aim to defend and promulgate the One True Way, imagined as the way things were understood in the earliest days when the Truth was first revealed. The movements have something else in common: though they venerate the old they are all new, being reactions to the modern world. The great paradox of fundamentalism is that it relies on precisely what it repudiates: interpretive latitude.”

In the remainder of the lecture Appiah provides many examples of wrong or mistaken identity how this can fuel prejudice, but also refers to how a proper understanding fosters good community.

Selected from the end of the lecture: “Once you think of creedal identities in terms of mutable practices and communities rather than sets of immutable beliefs, religion becomes more verb than noun; the identity is revealed as an activity not a thing. And it’s the nature of activities to bring change.....we do not merely follow traditions; we create them. Count that a burden, and a blessing.
Clyne Shepherd”

FROM THE ARCHIVES

John Peacock our church archivist has been researching aspects of our church and has written a series of articles which will be in The Sign over the next few months. Here is the first:

Know your church

There are two stain glass windows close to the pulpit. One of these is dedicated to Xavier Peel Massy (spelt without an 'e'. He signed his name 'Massy' in the Register of Church Services.) His father, Edward Taylor Massy, owned property in both Ireland and Pembrokeshire. Massy was born in County Limerick in the late 19th century when all of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom. He studied at Trinity College, Dublin before crossing to England. His first curacies were in Bristol. During the second part of the 19th century various Episcopal Churches set up missions to serve the rapidly expanding city. The Episcopal Church at Damahoy (St Mary's) founded missions in Colinton and Balerno. The Colinton Mission first met in 1883 renting a hall once a month for an evening service. Communion was celebrated at 8 O'clock on Monday morning. The present building, much smaller in his time with no extended nave and no Lady Chapel, was opened in May 1889. Rev Massy became Priest in Charge. Three years later St Cuthbert's was no longer a mission church and Massy became our first rector.

During some of his time as Rector he also served as a diocesan inspector of schools. At this time the Episcopal Church had their own schools in the city. There is a memorial to his wife carved in one of the pews. He left St Cuthbert's in 1906 and his successor was Frederick Haden, a Cambridge graduate from Wolverhampton.

The second window is dedicated to the memory of James Lindsay Auldjo Jamieson, the eldest son of George Jamieson formerly of Edinburgh. He died as the result of an accident at the age of only 24. At this time the family were living in Whitfield which is some miles south west of Hexham. I cannot find the link between the Jamiesons and St Cuthbert's.

John Peacock

ST CUTHBERT'S LECTURE

**17th March 2017
7pm**

Humpty Dumpty after the Fall: the Church and Conflict'

"I am one that has spoken to a King, I am ..., and, to show that I'm not proud, you may shake hands with me!"

Our Speaker - The Reverend Ruth Scott is a facilitator, mediator and broadcaster. She works primarily in the field of conflict transformation. She was among the first women ordained as priests in the Church of England in 1994. She became a member of the Quakers in 2014.

VESTRY REPORT – DECEMBER

At the December Vestry meeting held 13.12.2016 the following items were discussed.

The new Vestry members were welcomed and given an induction pack. Details of the St Cuthbert's Lecture, to be given on March 17 2017 by Ruth Scott were given and publicity for the event would be provided by the Communication group.

A new wheelchair had been purchased for the church.

Vestry was updated on the progress of the search for a new Rector. The profile had been updated to emphasise the boundary changes.

Feedback from the AGM:

- questions about finance, investment in the SEC Unit Trust Fund and Sarah's expenses were held over until the January meeting.
- Property: refurbishment of the choir vestry roof and hall acoustics were held over until the January meeting and consideration of child friendly space would be kept on the agenda. Work on trees in the church grounds and rectory garden would be ongoing and further quotations for the work sought.

AOCB. Decisions will be taken on how best to support the Knit for Peace charity; £200 was approved to support the Weekend Project; it was agreed that under appropriate supervision Taran might be allowed to shower at the Rectory; details were given of possible joint ecumenical events with the Parish Church and all Nations Fellowship at Oxgangs. In Sarah's absence Vestry discussed the question of her travelling expenses.

A copy of the minutes is at the back of the church and copies may be obtained from Hilary Pritchard, vestry secretary.

READINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2017 - Year A

Sunday 5th – Candlemas
First Reading Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 84:1-7
Second Reading Hebrews 2:14-18
Gospel Luke 2:22-40

Sunday 12th – Epiphany 6
First Reading Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8
Second Reading 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Gospel Matthew 5:21-37

Sunday 19th – Epiphany 7
First Reading Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18
Psalm 119:33-40
Second Reading 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23
Gospel Matthew 5:38-48

Sunday 26th – Sunday next before Lent
First Reading Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 99
Second Reading 2 Peter 1:16-21
Gospel Matthew 17:1-9

READINGS FOR MARCH 2017 Year A

Wednesday 1st – Ash Wednesday
First Reading Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Gospel Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sunday 5th – First Sunday of Lent
First Reading Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Second Reading Romans 5:12-19
Gospel Matthew 4:1-11

A BREW AND A BLETHER
Please join us in
St Cuthbert's Church Hall,
between 2-4 pm on
Saturday 4 February

FLOWER ARRANGERS' NEWS

February Flowers

February	5	Volunteer needed
February	12	Volunteer needed
February	19	Pauline
February	26	Pauline
Lent		

I am sure that you would agree that the church looked beautiful for the Christmas services. Thanks are due to all those ladies who worked so hard arranging the flowers and to Barbara for making the coffee, which was most welcome.

There will be no flowers during Lent, but the church will be decorated for Easter on Saturday 15 April.

If you would like to help to decorate the church or with watering the arrangements, please let me know. Margaret Holmes

A Visit to Lapland

Very early on the morning of December 17th we arrived at Edinburgh Airport with three VERY excited children who were going to see Santa in Lapland with Mummy, daddy and Grandma. After all the security checks etc we found the plane delayed by two & half hours! However after a pleasant flight we stepped off the plane into snow at Ivalo Airport in Finland almost on the Arctic Circle. We were met by lots of "naughty elves" who kept all the children amused. We boarded our bus called "Snowberry" for a 20 minute drive in the dark (only 4 hours of daylight) to the village Saareselke where we were to stay for two nights. The village looked magical, dozens of fairy lights everywhere and snow on all the trees. We collected our thermal suits, socks, snowboots and mittens, then a short walk to the accommodation. It consisted of two basic family rooms with an interconnecting door, each with three beds and a small bathroom – plenty of hot water. Outside was a very safe area away from the road so the children had great fun on plastic

sledges sliding down great mounds of icy snow. They would have played there for hours but the evening meal called at a nearby hotel. Everywhere we went in the village were these plastic sledges and all the children were pulled along by adults. So much fun especially for the youngsters!

On Sunday morning we boarded our Snowberry bus again for the 20 minute drive to a “full on” activity day in a woodland area at the North Pole. Lots of Christmas songs on the bus. Many more “naughty elves” everywhere and we were told what was available to do. My son-in-law said “ if we do everything we shall be here all day!” Well we did everything and caught the last bus, back at 5.00pm! The children played games (organised), went on toboggans, rode on a husky sleigh each one drawn by 5 or 6 dogs and driven by Mum & Dad – Grandma opted out (too low on the ground!) so I took the photographs. We all went to see Santa in a log cabin out in the woods, drawn by a tractor sledge. Santa was lovely, so nice with the children, and they each read out their letters to him. He had a long grey beard and whiskers. We rode on sledges pulled by reindeers in a “train” of 10 animals. We saw several little shows in log cabins or igloos – there were several of these in the area, lit by coloured lights and with ice animals carved inside. In the woods were several large tents with a centre fire to warm up, all serving hot chocolate or hot berry juice and freshly made pancakes. Lunch was also included – spaghetti bolognese which suited everyone. At 5.00pm back on the bus to the village and more sledging for the children. Then down to the hotel for a wonderful buffet gala dinner. Everyone was presented with a certificate to say we had been to the North Pole! Games and dancing for the children, all so well organised. Before leaving, on Monday morning, there was time for the children to sledge on a proper toboggan run just on the edge of the village. Then, returning all the borrowed clothing, we were on the bus bound for the airport and home. A truly memorable two days – I would not have missed it for anything.

Rosemary Yeoman

SHALOM (In the presence of God)

We seek to provide a 'sacred space';

A space to reflect, pray;

A space to find peace, stillness and refreshment.

We will meet on Saturday 25th February, in The Lady Chapel at 10am.

Wendy Pearson will offer us reflections as we move into the season of Lent. All are welcome to join us and enjoy coffee and cakes afterwards.

Wendy Pearson and Jean Myers

CHRISTIAN AID QUIZ NIGHT



Where? Our Church Hall

Time? 7.15pm – 10.15pm

How many? Teams of no more than 8 people.

Cost? £9

Includes? Two Quizmasters; a workout for your brain; supper; prizes (small ones!)

Organise a team and get your tickets from Patricia Brignall, Wendy Pearson or Margaret Temple

THE OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum meets on the First Sunday of each month

at 9.15am in the Church Hall Meeting Room.

THE LEPROSY MISSION SCOTLAND

TLMS NEWS

A Happy New Year to all YLMS supporters.

You will find copies of The Leprosy Mission's Prayer Diary - ASK 2017 – on the shelf by the Font. In it you will find information, stories and examples of the impact your support has on people affected by Leprosy. Please take a copy if you would like to do so.

I have already had some Blue Tubs handed in to me, so if you would like to give me yours in the next month, I will send another cheque for the accumulated amount in early March.

WORLD LEPROSY DAY is on Sunday 29 January this year. This is an opportunity to raise awareness and inform people globally about the facts regarding leprosy and the fact that it can be cured. There are details on p 13 in the prayer diary ASK 17

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Barbara Tatlock

PHOENIX GROUP

A large group of women from the congregation had a most enjoyable Christmas Lunch in December in a very grand room at the Royal Scots Club. As always, the Club provided an ideal setting for our traditional Christmas get together. The food was delicious, the cracker jokes particularly good and there was much interesting conversation, warm fellowship, laughter and fun, a very good start to the festive season.

Many thanks to Jean Myers for organising the event so well.

We have no events planned at the moment and would welcome suggestions for future gatherings.

Margaret Kieran

WESTGARTH WALKERS

A Happy New Year to one and all. On 11 December 13 of us enjoyed a lovely Christmas Dinner at the Spylaw Tavern. Good hospitality by the staff, good company and as ever good craik.

Dates for your diary:

Sunday 12 February: Can we please meet after 10.30 service in either the Lady Chapel or the hall to discuss plans for the 2017 programme of events.

Suggested dates:

12 March (details of this event will be published asap)

14 May

9 June

10 September

12 November

10 December Christmas Lunch

These dates are merely suggestions and can be changed to suit everyone. I do hope, however, that as many as possible can join us for the 12 February meeting.

As ever this group is open to everyone in the congregation, walkers (dogs welcome) no walkers, children. Please refer to Pew Notes, The Sign, Church notice boards for up to date information
June Bungay

LONE WORKER POLICY

On being advised that it was important to have a policy to give guidelines to those, both paid and volunteering, in the congregation who are likely to be alone in the course of their activities, there is now a Lone Worker Policy. This has been seen and approved by our Interim Pastor.

Copies are available on the church notice boards in the hall and at the back of the church. If you are to be on your own at any time on a church activity it is important that you read these guidelines.

Joan Smith

Vacancy update:

Statement given at AGM 11 December 2016

In response to requests this is a copy of the statement given by the Rector's Warden at the start of the AGM.

As you are all aware Maurice retired at the end of August 2016. In preparation for this the Vestry met the Bishop in late June to begin the process of moving forward. The Vestry also received at that time the standard notes from the Diocese on what the Vestry should be doing during a Vacancy. At that meeting, which was minuted, the Bishop agreed that we could proceed without undue delay, recognising that we had recent experience of two vacancies and also that we had undertaken a major congregational discussion, resulting in a mission plan in 2015.

In September the Dean, and our new Interim Pastor met the Vestry. She gave some additional advice and guidance and she too agreed that we might proceed without undue delay.

By the beginning of October, after some consultation with members of the congregation representing different perspectives, we were in a position to send a first draft of our profile to the Dean and the Bishop for approval. Although it is not specifically required, at that time, we made the profile available to all who might wish to see it and comment on it. A small number from the congregation took this opportunity.

In early November some members of the congregation expressed concern about the process and a meeting was arranged quickly to ensure that these concerns were voiced and the Vestry was made aware of the issues which were giving rise to those concerns as soon as was possible. 9 members of the congregation attended the meeting and an additional 3 who were unable to attend, sent written comments. The profile already under redraft took into account some of the views expressed (although the Vestry has not formally met since 17th November.)

In early November the Dean and Bishop returned their comments on our profile. I had a lengthy and most encouraging and helpful meeting with the Dean. The profile was resubmitted and this week final comments (which can easily be addressed) were received.

The Dean and our Interim Pastor have agreed the following time frame is acceptable (given the small changes yet to be made and a satisfactory advert being prepared): The Advert will be placed, if at all possible, around the second week of January. We aim to advertise more widely this time. Replies will go direct to the Bishop who will then

forward to us all suitable candidates, he will only exclude those who he feels would not meet the basic criteria for selection, in other words those the Bishop could not appoint. It should be available for 3-4 weeks with an agreed closing date. Interviews, depending on actual timing to be late February, but more likely early March. This means that if, and only if, we find a suitable candidate, our new Rector might be in place in July. The means of selection has yet to be confirmed by the Vestry but it is our firm intention to include people who are not on Vestry to give the widest possible representation of the congregation.

Now there may be questions you wish to ask. I would like to continue with the business of the AGM at this stage, but I will give an opportunity under AOCB for any relevant questions there might be.

Since this statement an advertisement has been prepared and the content has been agreed by the Bishop. It will appear in the Church Times on the SEC website and on our own website and. As is not uncommon, and for a number of reasons, the timing has slipped a little. We have been asked to give at least 4 weeks for advertising so we anticipate that interviews, given suitable applicants, will be late March. The Vestry has discussed, and will continue to consider, the next stage of the process. We intend that others will be invited to participate in this phase of the selection of our new Rector.

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