

The Beacon



St John's and Dairsie United Parish Church
United in Faith. United in Love.

Issue No. 02

May 2016

ATTITUDE DETERMINES ALTITUDE

How high do you want to soar?



Next Communion:
5th June 2016

SCO15721

Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends

It is May. Spring. Once again I am aware of the beauty that surrounds us.

A very well-known Afrikaans poem by Louis Leipoldt reflects on the beauty of Spring – but then there it is October: (this is the first of nine stanzas)

*Viooltjies in die voorhuis,
Viooltjies blou en rooi!
Viooltjies orals op die veld, En
orals, ai, so mooi!
Dit is die maand Oktober, die
mooiste, mooiste maand:
Dan is die dag so helder, so groen
is elke aand,
So blou en sonder wolke die hemel
heerlik bo,
So blomtuin-vol van kleure die
asvaal ou Karoo.*

A free translation:

*Violets in windows, violets red
and blue
violets in all the fields; all over its
beauty yields
It is the month of October, the
most beautiful of all
The days are clear and clearer,
the evening so green*

*The skies as cloudless and
heavenly blue*

*The garden full of colours - even
the dry old Karoo.*

My wish and prayer for you is that this springtime may be a time of renewal and growth too. It is not strange that the feast of Pentecost falls right in the middle of Spring! But aspects of renewal and growth do not happen without us doing some reflection on our lives.

Without falling into the pit of self-doubt or -questioning, it is always good to ask ourselves about what is happening, where we are and how we are doing – both physically, mentally and spiritually. Thus my wish is followed by a challenge to use some time to reflect on your own life. May you also find there the presence of the life-giving and life-sustaining presence of God.

During April I had the opportunity to stay in Paris for three weeks. I used this time as a “sabbatical” doing a good amount of reading, writing and reflection. Some of it has been part of the services during the month of May. I share some thoughts elsewhere in “The

Beacon”.

In June, Linda and I will be in South Africa for two weeks as my dear mother will celebrate her 80th birthday. We will also celebrate a 60th and 50th birthday with two of Linda’s sisters.

All three of our children (no... four!!!) will be in South Africa too. There is no doubt that we will celebrate Ben’s fifth year of good health after his illness and treatment.

May the beauty of Spring and the love of God fill you at this time.

With love

Jan Steyn

Editorial

How well do we know the Bible? I’m about to embark on some real and deep study of it very soon. We dissect this book like no other—what other book that you’ve read from which you could take various snippets in order to impart deeper wisdom to loved ones about life? This is what most of us get with the Bible—small passages, bitesize chunks—and the fact that we can do this is what makes it so very special but also what makes it so difficult to consider as a whole.

It’s daunting and the one word I would use to describe the book is “awesome” and I mean that in just about any way you can mean that word.

On a tangent from that I’d love to know from people two things about their Christianity. An “aha” moment when you realised “I’m a Christian” and a moment when you truly felt connected to God. Just a moment when you felt you were certain and He was with you. I’d like to share such stories in future editions.

Enough—it’s nearly Summer, go out and play!

David Bartleman



Ladies Group

The Ladies Group meets on the third Wednesday of the month in the Church Hall at 7.30pm.

Recently we have had very interesting speakers from Ceres Folk Museum and Barking Mad! Our next outing on May 18th is our annual walk and supper which this year is based in and around Falkland.

We are a very friendly, informal group and would welcome new members.

We break for summer and re-commence Wednesday 19th October 2016.

Helen Lang

Busy Hands

We have welcomed several new members to our group recently and we continue our very sociable afternoons. We also have some 'out' workers - those who, for various reasons, do not attend our meetings but work away at home producing items for our sales table and for our charity donations. We are ever mindful of them and are grateful for the work produced by all our members and friends. Thank you, too, for the donations of wool, buttons, etc. Can I remind you all that we are once again appealing for empty shoeboxes - we need to build up our supply before the autumn - so please bring them to the Church Hall anytime.

Joyce MacRae

Property Team

Thanks to a very generous donation by Jinty Wilson, hand dryers have been installed in the toilets at St John's, this eliminates the need for towels and in much more hygienic than hand towels.

Other than that there is little to report for this edition of The Beacon, one or two things are in the pipeline and routine maintenance goes on in both Dairsie and St John's.

Ian G. Wotherspoon
Property Team Leader

Gardening Group

After the loss of several members already this year through illness and retiral we are now seriously short of helpers on a Friday morning. Without additional support we will be unable to make the grounds as attractive as they have been. We will be delighted to welcome both women and men, even for part of a morning.

Looking more on the bright side we have planted three clematis plants beside the ramp in the hope of adding more colour to that side. We are also bringing on bedding plants for the two boxes at the

front of the church. The weeds that appear in the gravel will once again be kept under control using a very powerful weedkiller by Colin Campbell Brown.

John Macpherson



Christian Aid

As has become the custom over recent years, there has been no House-to-House collection this year. Envelopes have been placed in the pews for the first three Sundays in May and, indeed, by the time you receive this, it is likely that Christian Aid Week will be past.

However, I am happy to receive contributions at any time which can be forwarded directly to the

Edinburgh office. It is too early to give you the result of the collection but that will be reported as soon as it is counted.

Muriel Dymock

Christian Aid
We believe in life before death

An Attitude For Life

Dear friends, in this short article I share some personal thoughts and insights from my three week sabbatical in France. It might give you a peek into my private world – some of which I am not overtly proud of but which nevertheless are stuff that I faced and struggled with. I do share it as I know it was meaningful to me and might be of some help to others too.

*

Very early this year the unexpected opportunity to stay in Paris for three weeks knocked at my door. After some consideration I decided to take the chance. I asked for three weeks of my annual leave in order to make best use of this opportunity. A few previous visits to Paris and France have played quite a significant role in my life story and in my spiritual history, so it was with much excitement that I prepared and set out for Paris on the first of April.

Armed with carefully chosen books to read and two empty journals, a few clothing items, good trainers and lots of excitement, I arrived at Charles du Gaulle Airport quite stressed to get past the dreaded French Border Control. But I made it with no hassle. I arrived at the Gare du Nord at

11.15pm and then found my way to my lodging with the help of Mr Google Maps. It was quite scary walking through the streets of Paris that time of the night, obviously being a traveller.

I had previously decided to get around, I would rather walk than use the Metro. By the end of my stay there, my Fitbit had indicated that I had walked about 330 km. Why walk? Apart from the fitness aspect, walking gave me the opportunity to live at another pace. I wasn't there as a tourist. Neither did I want to "do" Paris. I wanted to use my time to read, write and reflect on what I have read.

Within the first few days - once the excitement of being there had vanished - I became aware that a deep feeling of sadness took hold of me. My thoughts had turned negative. I was alone - Linda was only there for five days in the middle of my stay there - I was very much aware of my lack of ability to engage with others on a social level and there were moments of sheer self-doubt.

I was quite aware of the contradiction: here I was in Paris, having looked forward to it for some

weeks and yet I was overcome with a deep sadness. How could that be? Why did this happen?

The first book that I read was Henri Nouwen's *Spiritual Direction*. In a chapter called "The Ultimate Affirmation", Nouwen wrote the following: "The ultimate spiritual temptation is to doubt the fundamental truth about ourselves that we too are God's beloved children. Then, when people speak well of you, you can walk around quite freely. When someone talks against you, it can cut deep into your heart. Why let what others say about you – good or ill – determine who you are?" I suddenly realised that I was the one talking against myself! I then – once again through reading Nouwen – had this flashing insight that I had turned to an attitude of being resentful instead of being grateful. This closed me for so many moments of joy, insights, experiences and opportunities. Life was passing while I was supposed to live it!

Something then dawned upon me: the basic thing that had happened to me was that my way of thinking "closed" me instead of "open" me. It is such a small and invisible change in attitude but makes such a VITAL difference! I also realised that this is a basic life-giving attitude towards life: being open.

Open to a new day. Open to new experiences. Open to other people. Open to accept them with their differences. Even open to receive and learn the lessons which sometimes come with disappointments. I realised that if I live with an attitude of closedness, life will pass and leave me depressed. If I live with a basic attitude of openness, I can receive God's grace, receive the grace that comes through others and receive life as a blessing. A small search through some Bible stories affirmed this: Abraham, Joseph, Paul and many, many others.

The biggest gift of my three weeks away: this little insight of living with a basic attitude of being open.

Jan Steyn

Fellowship & Outreach

We are very much looking forward to our Summer Supper on Friday 10th June. Fellowship & Outreach decided to try something different and everyone who attends will in some way have contributed to the food for the evening. We felt it was an opportunity for all members to be a part of the evening. Knives, forks and plates have been counted and there is room for all who choose to attend. After supper the Friends of St Columba's Choir will entertain us and we so appreciate their kindness in coming to our church.

Over the summer we will have our

usual Migrant Workers Ceilidh on Thursday 28th July. It is always a wonderful evening when we are delighted to welcome people from the local farms. They are always so appreciative and participate enthusiastically in the dancing.

On 20th August we will have our annual Corn Exchange Coffee Morning when both congregations work together to make the morning a success.

Aileen, Isabel and Mary

Cupar Arts Festival

The Church agreed to allow an installation (I think that is the right word) to be put in the little room from which the bell used to be rung. As this means that the Church will be open all day from 10am to 7pm during the week, we have been asked if we can provide help by having a rota of people at

the door of the Church to allow people to visit the building at the same time. If you would like to help with this, please let Pauline Craig or Muriel Dymock know.

Notes from the Session

As has been mentioned recently, one new feature for all the congregations in the area is the introduction of 'Clusters', encouraging people to work together. There is no doubt at all that this has been introduced because of the serious shortage of ministers and the unavoidable necessity to compensate for this in some way which falls short of closing churches. Our local cluster is to have a visit from a committee of the Presbytery to look a) at what we have been doing, and b) hopefully give us some practical guidance.

Under the a) heading, we held a very successful Ceilidh in the Old Parish Centre at the end of February, at which St John's and Dairsie congregation was very well represented. This raised sufficient funds to pay for the Fischy Music concert, aimed largely at children, in April. As a result, following the Spring Fayre in St John's hall later in April, we were able to devote the money raised (now, after further donations, well over £700) to 'Let's build a house' for Nepal. The sum required for a single house there is £500.

We were greatly saddened at the passing of two former Elders - Mrs Maribel Aitken, after a very long illness, and Mr John Hendry, very suddenly, shortly after his return from a wonderful holiday with two of his sons in New Zealand. We are very grateful for their faithful service as District Elders over many years and extend our sincere sympathy to their families.

The very successful Elders' Conference we held last June is to be repeated but it has been postponed from June until the autumn as it was difficult to find a suitable date.

The first House Group is meeting weekly and is open to anyone who feels this might be a different way of connecting with the Church. There is no limit to the number of groups and a new one can be established any time, if the interest is indicated. Please do not hesitate to let Jan or me know if you would like to learn more. We all hope that, by the time the next issue of 'The Beacon' is published, we will all have enjoyed the health-giving benefits of a warm, sunny summer. (Special arrangements will be

made for those rare members of our community who don't like the heat! Who might they be? Yes, they do exist and play a prominent part in the life of the congregation).

Muriel Dymock

“People may hear
your words, but
they feel your
attitude.”

John C. Maxwell

The Promise of Spring

Unfortunately this arrived too late for last issue but hopefully we can still enjoy it's deeper meaning in this issue. It came from Marlene Gillespie...

Our garden's coming back to life
And trees now are a haze of green,
Heart-cheering bobbing daffodils
Appearing round the village green.

If New Year resolutions fold,
Spring cleaning doesn't go to plan,
No matter! All that we can do
Is just the very best we can!

Whatever happens in the world,
What dreadful news the papers bring,
Let's count our blessings every day
And celebrate our welcome spring!



Eileen Hay

Communication Team

Greetings from the Communication Team.

You may have noticed that since the beginning of the year we have been using a new format for the Order of Service and intimations on a Sunday. We now have the same format and content in both services in Dairsie and St John's. In St John's we are also printing a few large print versions, please let Muriel or Roma know if you would like one of these, or would like it emailed. We have already had a little feedback and so far the changes have been generally well received, however we would welcome your comments over the next few weeks.

It has been brought to our attention that the PowerPoint slideshow used in our Sunday Services is easier to read some weeks depending on the colours used. We are careful to use the combinations of colour, font and size recommended for the best viewing experience but recognise that individuals may have their own preferences. Please let Jan or Craig Stockton know if you, or someone you know, has an opinion on this and we will do our best to appeal to the majority.

We also want to canvas opinion about offering a recorded version of the Sunday Service again. We could do this on little hand held recorders that could be distributed as required. For copyright reasons, we cannot post the whole service on the website but it would be possible to post Jan's sermon each week if there is sufficient interest. Please let us know what you think by emailing or speaking to Jan, Muriel or Roma.

Finally, thanks everyone for the positive responses to our Facebook page, which continues to attract new views all the time, and to the daily messages on the blackboard. We are now turning our attention to the website. We'd love to hear if you have skills in website design and any ideas for keeping it updated and relevant.

Our next meeting is on 13th June at 7.30pm in the Session Room at St John's. Please send us your ideas or better yet, join us!

Roma More

The Guild at St John's



During Assembly week a group of us will be attending a 'Big Sing' in the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh with other Guild members from all over Scotland.

While monthly meetings here take a break over the summer, we are contacting speakers for our new session beginning in October.

Before then we will be hosting our Strawberry Tea on Sunday 26th June from 2.00-3.30pm. As

before, everyone is welcome but we would particularly like to be joined by members of our congregation who cannot regularly attend church because they have no transport. Please think of friends and neighbours who would appreciate meeting up with others and invite them to accompany you.

Joyce MacRae

The Guild at Dairsie



We have no "meetings" during the summer months, but we still meet every month to host our Morning Coffees - the second Thursday of the month, 10.00-11.30am in the Church Hall.

This year we are having displays of old photographs with a different theme each month. We

have enjoyed seeing weddings and transport and in June we plan to feature "childhood years".

Everyone is welcome to pop in for coffee and a chat.

Willa Ferguson

Mission Partners in Zambia

*It was on a Monday morning and
weel I mind the scene,
That my Granny Fraser flitted frae
Aboyne tae Aiberdeen.
The village folk they a' turned oot,
tae see her on the road;
The horse that couldnae pu' the
cairt, ye should have seen the load.*

*There was airmchairs, bath chairs,
rookin' chairs as weel,
Cradles and ladles, a pram without a
wheel.
Woolen shawls, moth balls, jeely
pans and jars
And Grandpa near collapsed aneath
my grannies chest o' drawers...*

My brother-in-law, to encourage us, no doubt, sent us the whole ballad 'Granny Fraser's Flitting', for us to read and recite as the Waddell family prepared a few Monday mornings ago to flit frae Mwandia tae oor Synod hoose. I can tell in our case the verses were uncannily prophetic!

For the previous few weeks we have been collecting cardboard boxes and old newspapers to wrap and pack our possessions, trying to fill a couple of boxes a day with books and the various personal items we have accumulated over the years. Two local shops and the Hospital Pharmacy were much

appreciated sources for the boxes.

We could not have accomplished what we did without the help of different people. Isabel's husband boxed up the swimming pool and all the books from the shelves in the TV room

Erin and Toni arrived on the Saturday morning and were brilliant too; they went ahead and packed up our kitchen and scullery for us. Our sitting room for the last week or so became a store with furniture, boxes, rugs and pictures piled, stacked and amassed within.

We had ordered from Livingstone a 15 ton truck with a 40 foot container attached, the same company that moved Ruairidh and Fiona to Lilongwe. We had Florence Bridget and David's katundu as well as they all wanted to stay with us after the transfer. The truck managed to reverse as far as the double gates at the end of our drive. Only two branches needed to be carefully lopped from the muhonono tree to give enough headroom!

On Sunday afternoon, the choir arrived, to carefully fill the

container so that its volume could be used to greatest effect – not unlike a 3-D puzzle moving and trying different shapes and sizes to see which fitted the available space best. We were thankfully spared the rain until after 1800h when we called it a day. Lawrence kindly invited the four of us to supper to save us having to cook. Unfortunately, Mwandia is still woefully deficient in take-aways!

The next morning the beds and last of the furniture were loaded. Friends and neighbours came to “**kulaeza**” (bid us farewell), this punctuated the final touches to the loading with cheek-to-cheek embraces, lump-in-throat handshakes, tearful smiles and prayers.

After seeing the truck off Florence, Bridget, Mubita and Ellie climbed into the car with Ida and me. We stopped in Livingstone for the bank, at Monze for chicken and chips, and got to Lusaka around 19 hours, dropping Bridget and Florence at Bridget’s sister in new Kasama. We then spent the night in two rooms at St Paul’s Woman’s Centre arriving at the house to prepare for the arrival of the truck at Synod. David and Junior travelled up on the overnight bus

The unloading and depositing of

boxes and furniture in the new house began after breakfast on Tuesday. Again headroom was a problem. The truck reversed carefully to get as close to our gates as possible. An overhanging electrical cable had to be lifted over the cab and container roof. The Synod ancillary staff, friends and other members of the Mwandia diaspora in Lusaka all put their shoulders to the wheel and the truck was emptied of our possessions before lunch. It then set out to deposit Bridget and Florence’s goods at their house in Libala and David’s at Kabwata.

As we hit the street running we have both been outside Synod working, and renovating the house at the same time, most of the furniture is in situ but the spare bedroom and laundry are still storing yet-to-be-tackled boxes and suitcases. But we’ll get there eventually!

Ida & Keith in Mwandia

Church Register

Deaths

Mr Gordon Leng, West Port,	February
Mrs Cecilia Gold, 90 Kinloss Park	February
Mr William McRobbie, 96 Upper Dalgairn	February
Mrs Helen Heggie, Lunardi Care Home, (formerly of 7 Parliament Square)	March
Mrs Maribel Aitken, 6 Westfield Avenue	March
Mr John Hendry, Westfield Road	March
Mr William McMurtrie, 20 Mansefield Road, Balmullo	March
Mrs Eaton, Bathgate Court	April
Mrs Elizabeth Stevenson, Rosturk Care Home (formerly of Watts Gardens)	May
Mrs Anne Manson, North Union Street	May

Romans 14:8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's

New Members

Miss Morag Stewart, 14 James Inglis Crescent, Cupar
Mr Thomas Taylor, 4 Hill Street, Cupar
Mrs Andrena Henderson, 5 Nicolson Cottages, Cupar

1 Samuel 25:6 And thus you shall greet him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.'

Calendar of Regular Events

SUNDAY

09:45	Morning Worship	Church at Dairsie
11:15	Morning Worship	Church at St John's
11.15	Crèche	Old Vestry at St John's
11:15	Sunday Youth Groups	Hall at St John's
11:15	Sunday Squad	Hall at St John's

MONDAY

14:00	Guild	Hall at Dairsie
(Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb)		
19:00	Guild	Hall at Dairise
(Sept, Oct, Mar, Apr)		
(Third Monday of each month)		

WEDNESDAY

09:30	Midweek Service	Hall at St John's
10:00 - 10:30	Tea & Biscuits	Hall at St John's
19:30	Ladies Group	Hall at St John's
(Third Wed of each month)		

THURSDAY

09:30-11:30	Parents & Toddlers	Hall at St John's
14:15	Guild	Hall at St John's
(First Thursday each month, Sept to Apr)		
14:00	Busy Hands	Hall at St John's
(The other Thursdays)		
19:30	Badminton Group	Hall at St John's
19:30	Justice & Peace Group	St Columba's Church
(Second Thursday of each month)		Hall

FRIDAY

08:30 - 12:00	Gardening Group	Grounds at St John's
9:30	Keep-Fit	Hall at St John's
11:00	Drop-in for Carers	Hall at St John's
(last Friday of each month)		