

The Beacon



St John's & Dairsie United Parish Church
United in Faith : United in Love

AUTUMN
EDITION
2024



**Trust in the Lord with all your heart
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge him,
And he will make your paths straight.**

Proverbs 3: 5-6

What's On at St John's & Dairsie

Sundays:	10.30 am	Worship at Cupar St John's <i>Tea/Coffee/Fellowship after the service</i>
Mondays:		Dairsie Friendship Circle: War Memorial Hall (every 2nd week)
Tuesdays:	10 am–12 noon	Kinship Care Support Group (term time)
Wednesdays:	9.30-10.30 am	Midweek Worship
	10.30-1.30 pm	Warm Wednesdays
	2.00-4.00 pm	Afternoon Tea Dance (Oct - May)
	7.30 pm	Monthly Reflective Worship (first Wed of month)
Thursdays:	9.30-11.30 am	Toddlers at St John's (term time)
	2.00-4.00 pm	Busy Hands
Fridays:	11.45 am-1 pm	Drop In at St John's (last Fri of month)

Harvest Thanksgiving Service

Sunday 6th October

Collection for Foodbank



Afternoon Tea Dances—October Start

Weekly Tea Dances resume on **Wednesday 9th October** in St John's Church Hall. These run from 2 pm until 4 pm.

These afternoons are open to everyone in the community and not at all like "Strictly"! It's an opportunity to meet up with others for an afternoon of dancing of any ability, to enjoy the company and chats. Tea and biscuits, some home baking supplied, all for £5 per couple.

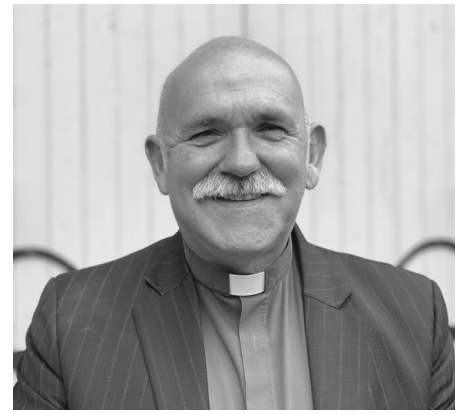
Looking forward to seeing anyone who would like to join us.

Val McKay

From Gavin

St John 5: 1-13

Sometime later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie - the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" ⁷ "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." ⁸ Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." ⁹ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, ¹⁰ and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat." ¹¹ But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.' " ¹² So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?" ¹³ The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.



A reflection on what you might have heard if you had met the cripple at the pool

"The thing to know about me is that I had no conception who he was. I had contracted polio when I was about six and there was nothing that could be done.

So, when I was 12, my father took me to the pool. Other boys got a bar mitzvah, I got taken to a shrine...well not really a shrine...there was something about the water moving and the first to get in got cured.

Listen, I've lain there for 38 years and there were no cures! Just a lot of fantasising!

I suppose you might say I had got comfortable there. I mean, I might have been a cripple, but I could smile and talk. I said hello to everybody, called them by name and it paid dividends...people put money into my hat. It wasn't the best existence, but there was worse.

And then up comes this total stranger. Now when I say total, I mean total. I never knew him, he never knew me. He didn't ask who I was or tell me his name.



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He just said, "Do you want to get better?"

I felt like saying, "Do you think I've been lying here on this stretcher for 40 years just to get a suntan?"...But I didn't ...I didn't like his question...it threatened me.

To get better would mean becoming responsible...to get better would mean walking and working and putting pennies in other people's hats. You know I nearly said, "Leave me alone."

But there was something about his directness, something in the way he cut across 40 years of apathy...so I said yes.

And ever since then I have been standing on my own two feet, in more ways than one.

But I didn't know him. And when the intelligentsia began to ask questions about who cured me, I couldn't give them a name.

All I could say was... "The man who asks disturbing questions."

"The man who asks disturbing questions", it's an interesting way to describe Jesus. We are more often used to Jesus being described as healer or teacher, or prophet or messiah or saviour, but "the man who asks disturbing questions" - are we comfortable with that image?

Well, whether we are comfortable or not, it's an image from which we cannot escape.

For often in the biblical stories of Jesus we see that he challenges people. He challenges their understanding of God, he challenges their lifestyles, he challenges their relationships with friends, family and neighbours. And of course he challenges attitudes towards people that have been excluded.

Of course, we know that Jesus offers challenge, and that walking in Jesus' way is challenging. We are all aware that life as a Christian is not about being content, standing still in our relationship with God, in fact we never really reach a point when change, no matter how small, is not required either in our individual lives or our faith community.

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At the moment the Church of Scotland is being asked some disturbing questions by God and for many the main issue of concern is about the future of the Church...church buildings closing, readjustments and unions happening all over the land, lack of ministers and members...yes, for many these situations are not easy and could be described as disturbing.

However, the disturbing question that I believe God is asking of the Church all over the world and not just here in Scotland is about our future and about mission.

What is the Church doing in the name of Christ to welcome the excluded... to feed the hungry both physical and spiritually... to comfort the bereaved... to love those who feel unloved...to proclaim peace and reconciliation where there is conflict...to live out the good news of Jesus across the land...to encourage people to believe?

As we live through this time of change and readjustment in the life of the Church, Jesus continues to ask the disturbing questions and says to us come, follow me, life will be different just as it was different for the cripple at Bethesda, but we can be assured that when we focus on the mission of Christ, and with the Spirit working in us and through us, then we will be greatly blessed, while blessing others.

Shalom.

*Your Minister and Friend
Gavin*



***Faith in God includes
faith in His timing***

Neal A Maxwell

Dairsie Building

As mentioned in the summer edition, the sale of the building at Dairsie was to be completed in July. This went smoothly and the sale was closed and completed on 26th July when the keys were officially handed over.



I would like to thank all those involved with this difficult, and emotional, process, both at Dairsie, members of the congregation, particularly Rhona for her diligent work throughout the sale process, and also the support and guidance received from the General Trustees and Law Department at the Church of Scotland.

You will have noticed some special items from Dairsie now in St John's. I'd like to particularly mention the bell (pictured) from St Mary's Church, which is on the chancel. The cross that was above the chancel in Dairsie – made from the last telegraph pole in the village - will also be mounted in the sanctuary at St John's in the coming weeks.

Gayle

Busy Hands

It's that time of year again when we invite you to help us fill shoeboxes for the annual Blythswood Appeal. If you wish to fill your own box, leaflets to guide you are available. However, as in past years, we will fill a box for you on receipt of a minimum donation of £20. We buy the requested items from this and the specified knitted garments come from the stockpile made by our ladies throughout the year.

We will be filling the boxes from now until the end of October. Please give your donations any time to Joyce Macrae, Pauline Craig, Aileen Kennedy, or Isabel Morrison. Thank you in anticipation of your kindness in providing a little cheer at Christmas to those refugees and others who have nothing.

Joyce Macrae

Celebrating Another Harvest and 30 Years of Fairtrade



As we look forward to thanking our farmers for another harvest here, it is also a reminder that we rely on farmers across the world for the food that needs a different climate to grow. They also deserve our gratitude.

Fairtrade fortnight this year has moved from its previous February/March date to September, 9th to 22nd. If you read this later we have countless opportunities all year to support the hard working producers of our coffee, tea, sugar and much more. The fair prices for labour and the Fairtrade premium automatically given to their communities allow those who are part of the Fairtrade programme to have the justice of a more acceptable quality of life.

Fairtrade goods do not always cost more than brands that are not so fairly traded. There are many to be found across our local supermarkets that are priced similarly or cost less. One sells two different ground coffees for £2.99 a bag. Its 200g of chocolate with the Fairtrade cocoa symbol is available for £1.45 and sits beside a well-known brand without the symbol that costs £2.49 for 180g.

If you can, please look for the logo and pick up the occasional bar of chocolate, pack of tea, coffee, sugar, bunch of bananas or even bottle of wine that tastes good and does good. Thank you.

Ruth Gettinby

Drop-in at St. John's

The Drop-In continues to be a very friendly and well-supported group. Next year, we will celebrate our 30th Anniversary.

At some of our meetings, we have entertainment or talks. The Ukulele Band entertained us at our July meeting and singing and foot tapping accompanied some of the well-known tunes. A game of bingo was played at our August meeting with some of our members proving to be expert bingo callers! The highlight of the year will certainly be our Christmas party which will be on 13th December.

If you are caring for someone with dementia and would like to join us, you can be assured of a very warm welcome. We meet in the church hall on the last Friday of each month apart from December. For more information you can contact Anna or Bob Farmer, tel. 01334 650326.

Carolyn Moorefield
Secretary

Best Wishes, Barbara

At the end of June this year, Barbara Brett retired as owner of the local branch of what was Helen O'Grady Drama Academy (latterly DramaKids).

Barbara had run groups all across Fife for over two decades, and had been running at St John's Hall for over 23 years.

In November they used the sanctuary for rehearsals (while we dealt with wasps!) and the young people loved it so much they asked to have their end of year show in the sanctuary rather than the hall. It was lovely that the parents and young people could enjoy the building on their last evening at St John's.

In recognition of her years at St John's, and to wish her well in retirement, Barbara was presented with flowers and a card from St John's & Dairsie.

Gayle



Guild

After the closure of St John's Guild in April we are all warmly welcomed to attend the Guild meetings at Cupar Old. If you would like a syllabus for their coming year please speak to Pauline Craig.

Fellowship and Outreach

In the next few weeks our thoughts will be turning to our “Open Weekend” on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th December. This will be its fourth Christmas and the theme this year will be Light of the World. We now reuse and recycle what we have gathered so the biggest cost will be the Christmas trees. With concerts, school visits and our Open Days we are glad to be able to share the beauty of our sanctuary.

We hope that, as in previous years, you will come and support us as the sharing of the true meaning of Christmas within our community is important to us all.

The blackboard continues to be a talking point and outreach, it is good that Tina from Tina's Café continues to be such a good contributor to the ongoing work. We would love more contributors, there is no test, just a willingness to chat to the people who pass by as you write the weekly word.

Busy Hands have asked us to take over the main organisation of the Blythswood Shoe boxes. The ladies will continue to knit for the boxes but will not be involved with the filling of them. We have a lady who is wonderful at covering the boxes and it is our hope to be able to fill 30 children's boxes and 10 for men and 10 for ladies. It costs around £20 to fill a box and we would be so grateful for donations of money so we can buy all we need for these boxes to be sent to Albania, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine.

Aileen and Isabel

Wednesday Evening Reflective Service

Wednesdays – 7.30pm
Sanctuary at St John's



The Lighthouse



Old Parish Centre, Short Lane, Cupar
brought to you by the Cupar churches

Cupar Churches Holiday Club 2024

"Do not fear for I am with you. Do not be afraid for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
Isaiah 41:10

This summer I had the privilege of leading the Primary 5/6 group called Parrot Fish at Cupar Churches Holiday Club from 29th July to 2nd August.

The theme this year was Deep Sea Divers. The children learned facts about the ocean and the creatures which live in its different zones. They also explored bible stories and covered Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Not bad in five mornings!

The club met in Cupar Old Parish Centre. On average there were 45-50 children each day and 15-20 adults plus eight teenagers who led the children in singing, crafts, games and drama. Cupar Churches Prayer Team upheld us in prayer while in the background were the snack providers. The week culminated in an evening BBQ at St John's followed by a presentation to Parents and Carers in Cupar Baptist Church.

There are some lovely children in Cupar who have a deep understanding of God's love. My favourite comment this year was from a P4 girl who said, "The leaders didn't like Jesus because he knew God better than they did." It is important in these times of change to nurture our young people.

As I led my group I gave thanks for the many older people across Scotland who have been part of my faith journey.

Please consider helping next year. You don't need to commit to the whole week but even a few hours would be much appreciated. You will get so much more out of it than you put in. I certainly have.

Jane Reid



**Coffee Morning
in aid of Church Funds**

**12th October
10 am-12 noon**

Presbytery News

June saw new Presbytery Clerk, Rev Alec Shuttleworth officially take up office. Alec brings a vast experience of parish ministry, knowledge of Fife Presbytery, as well as a good dose of humour to the role. Alec is also involved with the Heart and Soul Swing Band – if you’ve ever heard them perform, Alec lends his vocal talent to their performances, and it’s well worth hearing.

Presbytery also now have a full-time administration officer, Evelyn Connell, based in the Presbytery Office within the Wellesley Centre in Methil. The post of Mission Plan Implementation Officer is currently being advertised.

We offer congratulations and prayers for the journey ahead to Heart of Fife Parish Church - the new Union of the Glenrothes Cluster churches.

And to our brothers and sisters in Christ in our neighbouring cluster – Eden Tay congregations, who have their Service of Union on Tuesday 1st October - please hold them in your prayers as they start the next part of their journey together.

Gayle

Digital Giving



Over the coming weeks we will be introducing ‘Digital Giving’. As well as the usual options for donating to the church through freewill offering envelopes, standing orders and cash, this option will allow people to make a donation via their mobile phone or by using their credit or debit card. By scanning a QR code (see example above) with their mobile phone, people will be taken to a secure website where they will be able to type in how much they wish to donate. This money will then be transferred to the church’s bank account.

CROSSREACH

Care you can put your faith in

CrossReach Christmas Catalogue

The Christmas catalogue for CrossReach is now available for orders. This can be accessed online via the following link:

**[https://
www.crossreach.org.uk/
christmas-shop](https://www.crossreach.org.uk/christmas-shop)**

Useful Contacts

Minister:	Rev Gavin W Black 01334 209010 07870 486030 gblack@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerk:	Gayle Lennon
Deputy Session Clerk:	Rhona Ferguson
Presbytery Elder:	Val McKay
Organist:	Ian McLagan
Finance Convenor:	Craig Stockton
Property Convenor:	David Sinclair
Safeguarding Coordinator:	Andrew Kennedy
Hall Letting Convenors:	Paul and Margaret Reid
Health & Safety:	Margaret Kennedy
Roll Keeper:	Craig Stockton
Fellowship & Outreach:	Aileen Kennedy & Isabel Morrison
Refreshment Team:	Mari Black
Busy Hands:	Joyce Macrae
Flowers:	Olivia Fraser
Tea Dances:	Val McKay
Drop In at St John's:	Anna & Bob Farmer
Contact email:	StJohnsandDairsie@outlook.com

Worship Times

Sunday Worship
St John's
10.30am

*Tea/Coffee in hall
after each service*

Midweek Worship

St John's
Church Hall - 9.30am

*Faith &
Fellowship*

Reflective Service

Monthly 7.30pm
*Thoughtful, Prayerful
Reflections*



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