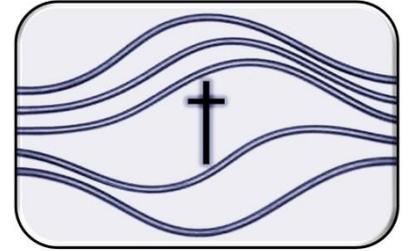




Wick St Fergus Church of Scotland



March 2017

Welcome, folks to March. Well, it's that time of the year again. Lent is almost upon us and I am sure that you will all be wondering about what to give up in order to show your identification with our Lord's temptations in the desert. I have given this some considerable thought and have come to certain, definite conclusions. This hasn't been easy since these things are very dear to my heart. Firstly, I am going to give up marathon running. Secondly, I am going to give up skydiving. Thirdly, I am going to give up eating raw Brussel sprouts. That is not what Lent is about. We have a strange view of the temptations of Christ in the desert. I won't go into detail on the temptations here (if you want that information, come and see us on Sunday mornings) but they have little to do with Christ giving stuff up.

That time has more to do with Christ giving himself to the purposes of his Father in Heaven. It is the same with our relationship with Lenten observance. We give stuff up because it makes us look the part, it makes us look "spiritual", in control of our lives. People then think: look how disciplined and purposeful that person is because they have given up Mars Bars for Lent or because they have given up putting sugar in their tea. That's the idea anyway. There are even brave souls who give up drinking Old Pulteney for Lent. That may well be the extreme end of things. But seriously for a moment, Lent is not so much about giving up, rather it is more about giving "to." It is about specifically setting a season of the year aside in order to give time to God, his purposes, time that you would have otherwise spent on yourself. Or if you are not religious it has to do with giving yourself to the welfare of others by giving up time that you would have otherwise spent on yourself.

It actually boils down to the same thing. In St John's Gospel and chapter six Jesus said, "I came not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose no one of all he has given me but raise them up on the last day." He also said in another place, "I can do nothing except what the Father shows me." In a world of competing voices, sometimes we need to listen to our inner voice of conscience, what the Bible calls the still, small voice of God. We need to take time out to look at our world, our land, our town even? We do this and we see what needs to be done but instead of stating, "something needs to be done about that" and then we sit around and complain about nothing being done, instead of that we should say, "what can I do to be part of doing something about that?"

For example, that is what the brave women at CHAT have done in campaigning for the maternity unit. That is what Mother Teresa did when she saw the poor in Calcutta. That is what Rosa Parkes did when faced with the injustice of being forced to give up her seat on the bus because she was black. Giving ourselves "to" a matter is an incredibly personal but brave thing. Sometimes we have to swim against the current of a culture of indifference to the needs of others. I found that to be the case when I used to work with homeless people and addicts and working girls in the city of Glasgow in the 90s. We would be criticised for working with people termed "undesirables".

Listen, folks, your town needs you. Your county and lands needs you. Your nation needs you. This Lenten season let's all give ourselves to this great place by getting involved in seeing our town, county and nation changed as people give themselves as gifts to one another. If you need help in doing that then come and see us at Wick St Fergus sometime. We are committed to the town and people of Wick. You know where we are.

(Revd John Nugent BD Honours)

Church Register

DEATHS: We are sorry to report the passing of the following people:

Donald Victor "Vicky" Banks: 28th January 2017

Shirley McPhee: 2nd February 2017

Stanley Carroll: 9th February 2017

Donald "Donnie" Miller: 17th February 2017

Ronald "Ronnie" Russell: 21st February 2017

Donald "Warty" McPhee: 22nd February 2017

Diary

Choir Wednesdays
2nd Stewardship – 7pm
9th Board – 7pm
29th AGM – 7pm

Flowers for Sunday

DATE	DONOR	ARRANGER
5 th Mar	Mrs K Harper	Donor
12 th Mar	Mrs C Mowat	Mrs Harper
19 th Mar	Miss Smith	Donor
26 th Mar	Mrs P Gray	Donor
2 nd Apr	Mrs A Roberston	Donor

Church Duty Rota

Date	BUS	STAIRS	DOOR	DOOR	USHER
5 th Mar	J McLennan	A Duffy	J Coghill	J Houston	E Henderson
12 th Mar	B Campbell	G Macdonald	J Mackay	M Foubister	M Thomson
19 th Mar	W Robertson	G Ramsay	A Rosie	G Watt	A Sinclair
26 th Mar	M Duffy	H Gray	J Cormack	I Banks	R Mappin
2 nd Apr	A Duffy	J Coghill	J McLennan	E Henderson	J Houston



The Guild

The new session of the Guild begins after the clocks go forward on Monday 27th March at 7.30pm in the Small Hall. The Arion Choir will be our guests. Transport is available, please contact either Annie Rosie (603618) or Janet McDonald (602543). The meetings will be held every two weeks as before until June 19th, when we will have a summer break, resuming on Monday August 28th until October 23rd, before the clocks go back for winter. A varied programme is planned and everyone is welcome.

We still urgently require distributors for our magazine.

If you feel you are able to help with this, please contact John Cormack: 01955 603774. We depend wholly on our volunteers and hope we can find more helpful people to assist within this area of the church. With thanks in advance.

Sermon information from the Minister

DATE	READING 1	READING 2	SUBJECT	DAY OF CHURCH CALENDAR
5 th Mar	Psalm 32	Matthew 4: 1-11	The Temptations of Christ	1 st Sunday of Lent
12 th Mar	Psalm 121	John 3:1-17	New Start, New Life	2 nd Sunday in Lent
19 th Mar	Psalm 95	John 4:5-42	Life for all	3 rd Sunday in Lent
26 th Mar	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Ephesians 5:8-14	Light overcomes darkness	4 th Sunday in Lent
2 nd April	Psalm 120	John 11:17-45	Out of the depths	5 th Sunday in Lent

Funny isn't it?

Funny how a £50 note looks so big when you take it to church,
but so small when you take it shopping.

Funny how long it takes to service God for an hour,
but how quickly a team plays 60 minutes of football.

Funny how long a couple of hours spent at church are,
but don't have difficulty thinking of things to talk about to friends.

Funny how hard it is to read a chapter in the Bible,
but how easy it is to read 100 pages of the bestselling novel.

Funny how people want to get a front seat at any concert,
but scramble to get a back seat at a church service.

Funny how people need 2 or 3 weeks advance notice to fit a church event into our plans,
but we can adjust our plans for other events at the last minute.

Funny how hard it is for people to learn a simple gospel well enough to tell others,
but how simple it is for the same people to understand and repeat gossip.

Funny how we believe what the newspapers say
but question what the bible says.

Funny how everyone wants to go to Heaven,
but they do not believe, or think, or say, or do anything.

Funny how you can send a thousand 'jokes' though an e-mail and they spread like wildfire,
but when you send messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing.

*FUNNY ISN'T IT?.....ARE YOU LAUGHING?.....OR ARE YOU THINKING?
SPREAD THE WORD AND GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD.*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Church AGM : 29th March – 7pm

This will be held in the Church hall at 7pm on Wednesday 29th March 2017.

You are all invited to come along to what is always a very enjoyable evening. The short business meeting, including a short update from the Convenors of the Congregational Board, Stewardship and Fabric Committees, and an explanation of the Accounts by the Treasurer, will be followed by the relaxing part which will be a social programme and Tea. Keep an eye out for further details in your March Newsletter.

2017 Stewardship Programme

The Programme for this year has been set and along with the usual items of Book Sales, Thrift, Street Stalls, Pudding night etc, we have two new ideas – the first will be a Wedding Exhibition in June and a Scottish Quiz possibly in November.

It is never too early to let us know if you have something for an Exhibition – it is a big space to fill! Now is the time too to start testing your family and friends to see who you are taking along to make up a team for the Quiz.

Watch out for more details of all our events each month in your Newsletter.



The next meeting of the Café church will be Sunday 25th March.

BOOK SALE

Last month we held our first Book Sale of the year and raised £473. Our thanks to all those who came along and bought books, and those who donated ones. Thanks also to the people who do the hardest work - taking out and putting away the thousands of books we have each time. Without them we could not hold this event. ***The next Book Sale is on Friday and Saturday 21st and 22nd July 2017***

Apologies for the miscommunication of book sale dates in last month's magazine – Michelle ☹

Website: Find us at www.wickstferguschurch.org.uk

Please can all items for February's newsletter be with Michelle by Wednesday 22nd March – Thank you

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