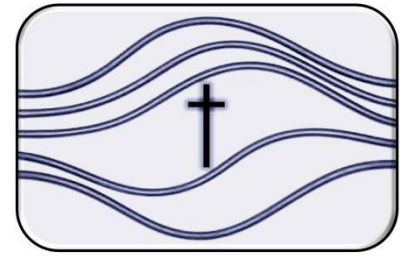




Wick St Fergus Church of Scotland



March 2020

Hello everyone and welcome to March. By the time you read this I will have had my 58th birthday. Now I know already what some of you are thinking: no way is John as old as that! Well, that is what years of clean living do for you. Seriously, by the time you read this I will have passed my eleventh year in this fine Royal Burgh. As part of my review of my time here I have been remembering all the different kinds of people I have met. I have been reviewing all that I have learned from folks in the town and one of the things that I have learned is the majority of folk in this town have been fine, affirming people. I have received encouragement at a level that I have not experienced elsewhere. I have experienced the other kind of thing as well, but it is important to remember that these folks are in the minority and speak only for themselves, not for anybody else.

Just on that, I came across something recently that I thought you might find interesting. Here goes: humanity is the only species on earth that experiences the phenomenon known as **Schadenfreude**. Let me explain what the word "Schadenfreude" means. The word is defined as "pleasure derived from the contemplation of the misery of another." It is really a way of avoiding helping someone who is in need by attempting to further derive a moral justification for selfishness. It is not very nice. Fortunately, we have only a few folks like this in the town, but the problem is that they are vocal above and beyond their numbers. They avoid responsibility by finding obscure causes for the misfortunes of another. They also refuse to accept their own culpability in the misfortunes experienced by others. They are quite prepared to leave that kind of work to others.

It reminds me of a story concerning Jesus in the Gospels. One day a blind man was pointed out to Jesus by the disciples. They put a question to Jesus, trying to put him on the spot. They asked him, "Who sinned, this man or his parents or one of his ancestors that he was born blind?" Jesus response was clear and succinct. "Neither this man nor his parents but rather that God's works might be revealed in him!" He then healed the man. But the problem was that the healing took place on the Sabbath. That was a major no-no. The know-it-alls, who took pleasure in apportioning pain and misery to unconfessed sin or to family origin, told him to go away and he was cast out because he had refused to condemn the one who had healed him.

When Jesus heard that he had been cast out Jesus went and found him. Note what happened here. It was the people who took pleasure in the man's infirmity who cast him out. Jesus' act of mercy threatened their excuses for doing nothing to alleviate alienation and pain. I guess that a modern equivalent of this today would be the specious and thoroughly mischievous argument that HIV-AIDS is God's judgement on homosexuality or that the death of Princess Diana was the judgement of God upon her because she was going to marry a Muslim.

Those for whom Schadenfreude is a way of life are rarely truly happy people. One would have to be miserable oneself in order to take pleasure in the misery of another. Here at Wick St Fergus we will have no truck with this kind of nonsense. It is not our way. That is why we always say at Communion that the feast is for "those who have tried to follow Jesus as well as for those who have failed." Like we say in our favourite hymn, "all are welcome in this place." If you want to find out more, come and see us. You know where we are.

Revd John Nugent BD (Honours).



Church Register

We are sorry to report the death of the following people:

28th January - Mary "Moirá" Swanson, nee Sinclair. Beloved wife of the late Sandy Swanson, dear mother to Janice, Alexander, William & Mary.

15th February - William Anderson "Billy" Cormack. Beloved husband of the late Jean, dear Father of William, John and Andrew. Dear brother of John, elder of Wick Old Parish Church and then Wick St Fergus Church.

Flowers for Sunday



DATE	KINDLY DONATED BY	ARRANGER
1 st Mar	Mrs K Harper	Donor
8 th Mar	Mrs Watt, Broadhaven	Mrs K Robertson
15 th Mar	Miss Smith, Broadhaven	Mrs Harper
22 nd Mar	Mrs P Gray, Louisburgh St	Donor
29 th Mar	Mrs A Roberston, McLeod Road	Mrs Harper

Church Duty Rota

Date	BUS	DOOR	USHER/DOOR
1 st Mar	J Mclennan	E Henderson	J Coghill
8 th Mar	P Macadie	J Mackay	M Foubister
15 th Mar	P Ramsay	A Sinclair	W Robertson
22 nd Mar	G Watt	J Cormack	I Cormack
29 th Mar	P Macadie	E Henderson	J Coghill

SERMON INFORMATION FROM MINISTER

DATE	READING 1	READING 2	SUBJECT	DAY OF CHURCH CALENDAR
1 st Mar	Psalms 119:1-16	Mark 1:12-13	The Deal-breaker	1 st Sunday in Lent
8 th Mar	Genesis 12:1-4a	John 3:1-17	The new start	2 nd Sunday in Lent
15 th Mar	Psalms 46	John 4:5-42	Mercy knows no boundaries	3 rd in Lent
22 nd Mar	Exodus 2:1-10	John 19:25b-27	Mother's Day	4 th in Lent
29 th Mar	Psalms 130	John 11:1-45	Out of the Depths	5 th in Lent

*******FUTURE EVENTS*******

AGM – Sunday 31st March – 12.30pm

Our Annual General Meeting will take place immediately after our Sunday service in the church on Sunday 29th March. All are welcome.



Spring Thrift: 31st March – 2nd April 2020

Our spring thrift will be open once again from 31st March to 2nd April. The hall will be open for the Hang up on Thursday 27th to receive any goods you may wish to donate.

As always, the usual array of goods; bric-a-brac, bedding, lamps, pans etc. will be available at amazing prices. Should you wish new curtains, bedding or cushions, we always have a wide selection available at great prices. Pop past and see us, the popular baking tables, chutney, jams etc. will be available too. Donations for any of the above will be gratefully received, if possible before 10am each day. Thank you.



YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!!



MAGAZINE Distribution

Various distribution districts do not have collectors at present, and at the start of 2020, we have 5 districts without help. If you would be able to assist with the distribution, please contact John Cormack (603774) for further details. Thank You, without your continued support, the church would not function.

SUNDAY MORNING Helpers

We are desperately short of helpers for Sunday morning duties, such as opening the door, greeting people as they arrive, counting money etc. If you would be willing to help any week, without being added to the rota, please speak to any duty elder that week. Simply helping count the offering would dramatically lessen the load of those on duty each week. Thank you in advance for your consideration. All these small duties help keep the church running smoothly.

With thanks

The choir went to Bilbster for a Christmas service at the end of last year, after which, they enjoyed tea and treats. They had a lovely afternoon and took home lovely memories, as well as a very kind donation to the church. The choir would like to thank you for your hospitality and kindness – and the church thank you for the generous donation.

I CANNOT PRAY....

I cannot say **Our** if my religion has no room for others and their needs.

I cannot say **Father** if I do not demonstrate this relationship in my daily life.

I cannot say **who art in Heaven** if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things.

I cannot say **hallowed be thy name** if I, who am called by his name am not holy.

I cannot say **thy Kingdom come** if I am unwilling to give up my own sovereignty and accept the righteous reign of God.

I cannot say **thy will be done** if I am unwilling or resentful of having it in my life.

I cannot say **on Earth as it is in Heaven** unless I am truly ready to give myself to his service here and now.

I cannot say **give us this day our daily bread** without expending honest effort for it or by ignoring the genuine needs of my fellow men.

I cannot say **forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors** if I continue to hold a grudge against anyone.

I cannot say **lead us not into temptation** if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted.

I cannot say **deliver us from evil** if I am not prepared to fight in the spiritual realm with the weapon of prayer.

I cannot say **Thine is the kingdom** if I do not give the King the disciplined obedience of a loyal subject.

I cannot say **Thine is the power** if I fear what my neighbours do or say to me.

I cannot say **Thine is the glory** if I am seeking my own glory first.

Author unknown ©Parishwindow.co.uk

Website: Find us at www.wickstferguschurch.org.uk or find us on facebook.

Items for the April newsletters to be with Michelle by Sunday 22nd March – Thank you.

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