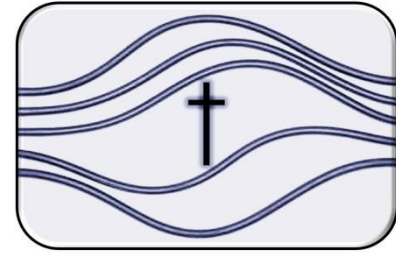




Wick St Fergus Church of Scotland



May 2019

Welcome to May and I hope that you all had a relaxed and blessed Easter. As is the way of these things, Easter talks much about death and resurrection. These are powerful themes. When used as metaphors their substance is taken out of the realms of private pious reflection and moved into the realm of experiential reality. Some have speculated that the resurrection speaks of revived hope in the midst of a world that seems bereft of hope. Yet others have spoken about the ongoing nature of life in a world characterized by death.

Whatever way you understand it, what is clear at least is that the cross was never meant to be the end. In the resurrection God is saying that he has the last word and not the dark powers of this age. For the broken or tortured mind this is a life-saving revelation. The world might try to convince you that death ends everything so why bother? But the resurrected Jesus says, "You are mine. You are a person of value. You are important, so important that I defeated death." I just spoke about death and resurrection as metaphors. No longer are we challenged to accept the "right" theological platform. Instead by coming back to us and by being God in human form, Jesus not only sanctified all human life, but he also was informing us that life is sacred.

Something that we used to say in the Iona Community when I worked with them just before I came to Wick was that "we believe in life before death." St Paul once wrote that if Christ, "be not risen from the dead we are of all people the most miserable." If this sounds trite then think of it this way: eternal life is not about pie in the sky when you die and neither is it about steak on the plate while you wait, but instead it has to do with sharing the life of God within us and around us now. We do this even if we do not see the immediate benefit to ourselves as individuals.

Another danger is when we give to others, usually when there are witnesses about, and we make a great effort in telling others what we do. Jesus once spoke about this when he condemned those great guardians of the law, the Pharisees. He accused them of making the law to be ineffective because they had so surrounded with ill motives that they permitted themselves to ignore the needs of their family. Unless theological reflection leads to a commitment to the welfare of our neighbours, then it becomes a waste of time. Just as the cross proved Christ's commitment to sharing in our suffering, so his resurrection proves his commitment to our living. I, for one, am thankful for this. Because death is not the end. I can confidently say that God's purpose for us is life and that anything; any -ology, anything that appears to justify the self at the expense of the many is not Gospel.

Sometimes it's difficult to see life if all that is around you is darkness. It is, however, important to realise that the darkness is passing. Christ experienced this on the cross when he said to the thief hanging beside him that he would be with Christ that very end. If you would like to more about living with purpose, then please come and see us. You know where we are.

Revd John Nugent

Church Register



We are sorry to announce the passing of the following people:

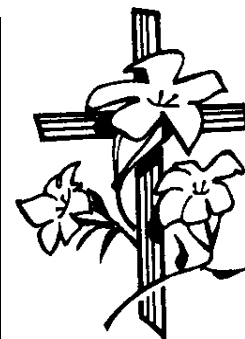
10th April: Isabel J Sutherland "Bunty" (nee Smyth) – beloved wife of the late Donald, loving mother of Donna, Graham and the late Bryan. Conducted by H. Stewart

Correction: 9th March – David Bremner Smith: beloved husband of Jessie.

Dear Father to Marion, David and James.

Flowers for Sunday

DATE	KINDLY DONATED BY	ARRANGER
5 th May	Mrs A Robertson, Macleod Road	Mrs Harper
12 th May	Mrs P Watt, Whitehouse Park	Donor
19 th May	Mrs Foubister	Mrs Harper & Donor
26 th May	The Malcolm Family	Mrs Simpson
2 nd Jun	Mrs Simpson, Ackergill Cres	Donor



If you would like to fill an empty date on the rota please contact Mrs Harper -602612
THE LARGE HALL IS IN USE EVERY SATURDAY From 7.30am UNTIL 11.30 and flowers
cannot be arranged during this time. Please respect these timings.

Church Duty Rota

Date	BUS	STAIRS	DOOR	USHER/DOOR
5 th May	P MacAdie	J Mackay	B Campbell	M Thomson
12 th May	W Robertson	G Watt	A Sinclair	G Ramsay
19 th May	P MacAdie	J Cormack	M Duffy/R Mappin	I Banks
26 th May	J Coghill	A Duffy	E Henderson	J Mclennan
2 nd June	J Mackay	B Campbell	M Thomson	M Foubister

As decided at Session, once duties are complete, usher to go on DOOR duty as 2nd person.

Pudding Night – Saturday 18th May

Our now annual pudding night has always been a great success, with amazingly tempting and tantalising delights on offer. Come along and sample an amazing feast of puddings, cakes, and all sweet treats (and maybe a fruit salad!) as well as tea and coffee for ONLY £3, with a raffle on the night too. Come and enjoy a wonderful selection of treats.





Guild

April 1st - The first Guild meeting of the new session was well attended and the evenings leader Janet McDonald welcomed guests Major Morag Sabiston and the Salvation Army Praise Singers. Following a hymn, reading & prayer, Janet thanked Annie Rosie for her many years as bus "guru, and Alison McAllan for her sterling work on the committee and sending the "We Care" cards and letters. Janet McDonald is now bus "guru" and Dinah Sutherland will send cards. Major Morag and Singers gave a wide selection of songs, poems, messages and stories. Major

Morag said it is good to laugh and we certainly did. The enthusiastic way they used the tambourines raised our spirits as we imagined marching behind them on parade. A beautiful duet by Major Morag and her daughter brought a wonderful programme to an end. The meeting was closed with the singing of a hymn and a prayer, before a welcome cup of tea was served.

April 15th - Leader for the meeting was Phyllis Gray, who had chosen a lovely hymn and a Bible reading suitable for the Easter season. The speaker for the evening was Mr Alistair Ferrier, who, with his wife Fiona, had a holiday in Vietnam and Cambodia last year. His presentation was beautifully done, and Alistair himself was so knowledgeable about the areas they visited that we came away wishing that our menfolk had been there too. He explained about the history, culture and life experienced in the two countries, emphasising the devastation of political and civil wars. He took us to the Cambodian killing fields and showed us exhibits in the Killing Fields Museum. We also learned about how old people are looked after and how poverty is still rife. One slide from Vietnam showed a gold-plated Cadillac, parked beside a pavement, with a little 4 year old boy sleeping in the gutter beside it. In Cambodia there is no welfare state, although they found the children to be very happy, very polite and very clean. The Buddhist monks look after the old folk. The traffic was mostly motor bikes and scooters, and to get across the road meant taking one's life in one's hands: just walking into the traffic and praying that the bikers would make their way around the pedestrians. This report only skims the surface of what we learned that night and we were all sorry when the time came to close the meeting and have a cup of tea.

Future Dates.

May 1st Caithness Guilds Together Rally at 7pm in Castletown Church.

May 13th Matter of Opinion

May 27th Arion Choir.

June 10th Mrs Eswyl Fell/Indian Odyssey.

June 24th Visit to Newton Hill Croft.

July 31st - Guild Fund Raising Event: Archive Photo Exhibition - J. McDonald Photographers.

April's Thrift & Fundraising

£1488.20 was the amazing total raised from our Thrift. It is surprising how much money it takes to run the church, and in order to keep going, we must fundraise to keep our doors open. We rely upon our weekly collections, monthly envelopes and fundraising events to help us carry on, and here at St Fergus, our survival depends upon our wonderful congregation/parish supporting us. Thank you all, for your continuing support.

***Answers to our April's Quiz. 1. Saul 2. Bathsheba 3. Absalom 4. Forty years
5. Solomon 6. Elijah 7. Five 8. Pontius Pilate 9. Revelation 10. St. Paul***

May Quiz

Answers will be published in June's newsletter.

1. Who found himself in the Lion's den? 2. Who was swallowed up by a great fish?
3. The Book of Acts tells of which Apostle's conversation?
4. Who met a butler and baker whilst in prison?
5. What is the Apostle Thomas sometimes known as?
6. Name an old Testament book beginning with H.
7. What were the names of the two sisters of Lazarus?
8. Who said: "Repent – for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"?
9. Who was King in Judea when Jesus was born?
10. Where did Joseph take Mary and Jesus to live?

Goodbye and Good luck Nancy

Nancy is one of the most honest people I have ever known in almost forty years in ministry. Her home-made soup is legendary. I always knew where I was with Nancy and her departure for the wrong compass direction is a great loss to Wick, St Fergus Kirk, our community and, in a purely selfish sense, to me. Nancy is thoroughly deserving of the respect in which people hold her. I don't know if she is aware of the high regard in which she is held. She has a heart as big as a Caithness sky and I will miss her. Nancy is the first person who caught me cheating on a diet. I will tell you that story sometime. What I do want to emphasise is that she is an example of what a Christian should be. She is, above everything else, a woman of faith. Nancy is an example to us all and for the rest of my life and ministry I will always look to her as an example, as a Christian woman who put others before herself. I can't speak for anyone else, but I will always be proud to call her (piously) my sister in Christ but more importantly, she is my friend. I can only hope that her new faith community will be inspired by Nancy's love and commitment as I will always be. **Revd John Nugent.**

In addition to what John has relayed to us I was trying to think of a word that describes Nancy, I couldn't come up with a single word but I did come up with two which I think describes her "Always there" whether it is a fund raiser, the Guild, the Choir, the Sunday School or any function in our congregational life Nancy was "Always There." It is said that ladies are the backbone of any church and Nancy played her part in that to the full. Our congregation will miss her, the Guild will be the worse for her departure and the choir will certainly miss her presence. Not a lot of people know this, but Nancy is the Choir call girl. When the choir meets for practice we first go over or learn a new introit and Gradual which we sing on Sunday, then we turn our attention to the hymns. Ruth prints out the order of service and distributes a copy for each row of the choir, there are five in the front row and five in the second so that everyone can't see the order. Nancy is the caller and we will miss her dulcet tones floating across the choir. **Harry**

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

Please can all items for June's newsletter be with Michelle by TUESDAY 21st May – Thank you.

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