

KIRK OF KEITH: ST RUFUS, BOTRIPHNE AND GRANGE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Issue No 73

April 2016

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of my ministry I once met a recently retired minister at a conference. He served as a chaplain in the Royal Navy during World War 2 and for a while he was based at Scapa Flow in Orkney. I had visited Orkney often and at one point could have been called to minister there and maybe that is why we got talking. We talked a lot about the landscape and of the many historical artefacts dotted across the island but it was his reminiscences during the war years which fascinated me.

He held a service every Sunday evening at 9pm on a battleship called HMS King George V. On the communion table in the Chapel was a simple wooden cross, which the ship's carpenter had made. His services were always well attended due, possibly to the unpredictability of whether the crew would survive another day.

When the war ended he heard that the battleship was being broken up in Clydebank and so one day he went down to see what was left of the great ship. He sought out one of the foremen and explained who he was and asked if he could see the chapel room. Although the ship was in the process of being broken up he found the little wooden cross, which took pride of place on top of the communion table. He was given permission to take it home to his manse.

He confided in me that the great battleship with its fourteen-inch guns has all but disappeared – made into razor blades or Coca-Cola tins. All that is left is the wooden cross. For such a simple symbol it had a powerful effect on that minister and the men who served on HMS George V.

The cross will stand at the heart of our worship this Easter and it's reassuring to know that it will be empty. The cross tells us of the love of God for us all – love that is stronger than death itself.

Rev Douglas Stevenson, Interim Moderator

Pastoral Visiting

As Locum Minister I am happy to visit folk of the congregations who are ill in hospital or at home. However, as I don't live in the parishes I do need to be kept informed as to those who are in need of a visit. So please let me know by calling me on 01343 870667.

Rev David Whyte, Locum Minister

Update from Nominating Committee

The Parish Profile has been compiled and approved and our vacancy is advertised in the current edition of Life and Work (April) and we look forward to seeing what response this brings. A church website has been developed at www.strufus.org where the parish profile can be viewed. Our thanks go to our webmaster Iain Carr for creating and managing the website.

Fiona Simpson, Nominating Committee Convener

News from the Guild

We're almost at the end of our programme with just the Spring Evening on the 11th April left on the calendar when the Melody Makers will be entertaining us in the Church Hall at 7.30pm - an event open to everyone, not just Guild members. It's a good way to end an interesting programme of events over the past year. We've had a variety of speakers and entertainment, ranging from Joyce Dawson and her children's choir who came along to our Scots Night in January, to Heather Streeter talking about her visit to Iona and Catherine Green informing us about the work of Moray Fresh Start. Interspersed with these speakers were our coffee morning in February and a witty evening of Call My Bluff chaired by Steve MacBeath. Members enjoyed the Spring Rally in Portgordon and also took part in the World Day of Prayer in the North Church. We are now looking forward to the Presbyterial Songs of Praise in St Rufus Church on 4th May at 7.30pm. This is a big event which will be attended by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, with accompaniment by the Silver Band. At our AGM on 14th March, Norma Gray informed us of the monies raised over the last three years for the different projects which the Guild supports: £775,076.90 has been raised by Guilds throughout Scotland. Our Guild raises money for these projects by having an annual sponsored walk. This year it's on 21st May and if you know a member of the Guild and would like to sponsor them that would be greatly appreciated. Those who are less able to walk are taking part in a sponsored silence in the Church Hall on the same day. They admit that staying silent might be a challenge and are also grateful for your support should you wish to sponsor them for worthy causes. The new committee will be planning next session's programme soon. New members are always most welcome and you don't have to be female to come along!

Elizabeth Copp, Secretary

Christian Aid

Christian Aid Week is from 15-21 May and the annual coffee morning will be held on 7 May to avoid clashing with other events. The coffee morning has been our major fundraising event and I hope it will continue to be as successful as it has been in the past. The need for aid never seems to diminish. We have all seen heart-breaking scenes from war-torn and famine-stricken areas on TV, people having to leave what is left of their homes or trying to feed their families on next to nothing. It can leave us feeling helpless. We can't go there and give food and comfort, but we can give, and give cheerfully. Church members have in the past done just that. All those who give time, donations and money do so cheerfully. The atmosphere of good humour and hard work makes it a joy to be part of. I have already received many offers of help so I'm sure we can make this year's donation as good, if not better, than in past years. **Eileen Leighton, Christian Aid Convener**

Arts and Crafts Keep Children and Leaders Busy

The bairns and leaders made posters to decorate the church for Easter. Earlier in the session we made a LOVE tree for Valentine's Day for those we have loved and lost. It ended up bigger than we had anticipated as we really got into this craft activity. We learned about Jesus and the Disciples with crafts that are on display in the hall. We have around 30 children that come along regularly every week and we all have a great time. We're always delighted to see any new children who want to come along and they are always most welcome. We thank all our fellow leaders who turn up every week to help us, we really appreciate all the help; even Esther could not resist coming back to help us with our Easter posters and we were delighted to welcome her back! If anyone is interested in helping us, even for a short time, please contact myself or Margaret Henderson.

Beth Inglis, Sunday Club Leader

Youth Group's Got Talent

The Youth Group has been working hard on this year's show which will include a variety of songs, dance routines, instrumental performances, and sketches. The youngsters have devised the programme themselves and they stage the show on 21st and 22nd April in the Longmore Hall, beginning at 7pm. Tickets are available from Patersons, Clark's Pharmacy and Youth Group members.

St Rufus, Botriphnie and Grange Church - come and join in the Lord's Supper

Sunday, 24th April - St Rufus Church 10.15am and 6pm.

Sunday, 24th April - Grange Church 11.45am.

Sunday, 1st May - Botriphnie Church 11.45am.

Parish Register to 31st March 2016

Baptism

"The Lord bless you and keep you..."

January - Innes James Stables, son of Maureen and Neil Stables

Weddings

"My beloved is mine and I am his"

December - Carol Brown and Liam Holmes

March - Fiona Rhynas and Mark Copland

Funerals

"Come to me all of you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest"

December - Helen (Nellie) Gray

January - Albert (Sandy) Barclay

George Allan

George Smith

Margaret (Meg) Barbour

February - Margaret (Peggy) Wright

Alexander (Sandy) Gauld

Forbes Stewart

March - George (Dod) Balgowan