

KIRK OF KEITH: ST RUFUS, BOTRIPHNE AND GRANGE

Issue No 76

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

April 2017

Dear Friends in St Rufus, Botriphnie and Grange

Easter is late this year – it has to wait till the Sunday after the first full moon after the 15th March. This makes Easter coincide with our northerly spring, so our spring flowers and the wonder of germination and the birthing season will all be heralds of resurrection.

Jesus referred to it when he said, 'Unless the seed falls into the ground and dies, it remains a single seed. But if it falls into the ground and dies, it becomes many seeds' (John 12:32)

The Scottish Easter hymn 'Now the green blade riseth' refers to it, 'Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been, love is come again, like wheat that springeth green.' (John MacLeod Campbell Crum)

Or this one from a contemporary American Lutheran hymn writer: 'Winter is past, the night is gone; Christ's light, triumphant, pales the dawn; Creation spreads its springtime bloom; Life burst like flame from death's cold tomb.' (Herman G Stuempfle)

And Easter can be a reviving and re-energising of faith. What we thought was lost to us is returned to us in a greater way. What we gave up on now seems full of potential.

It's a time of spring cleaning in our homes. Jesus used that symbolism to teach about clearing away clutter in our lives. It is also a time for turning over the soil in our gardens. That was referred to by the prophet Jeremiah who said, 'Break up your fallow ground it is time to seek the Lord.'

In the farming community, it is a time to share equipment and labour to get the spring work done in the window of weather's opportunity. We have continued to see good co-operation in our local churches. A joint choir will sing at the Good Friday service at St Rufus on 14th April, concluding the Holy Week services which we will host this year. It is good to welcome Rev Michael Last to the Rectory of Holy Trinity Church and to feel that ministry in Keith is not such a lonely job. We were able to share the service in the community hours of one of the workers to tidy up the St Rufus Manse grounds.

By the time this newsletter is published we will have interviewed three fine candidates for the post of Parish Assistant, have we hope to have invited one to take up the appointment. That will be a big help to both parishes and their ministries.

Among ministers it is the best time of year when the prospect of a move might be considered. We pray that such a stirring will lead one to a call to Keith.

I continue to be grateful to David Whyte for his work as locum, Michael Newlands as youth worker, and all your office bearers for their support. The recent Stated Annual Meeting of the congregation gave a fine impression of a congregation serving the Master, the church and the community in a variety of enriching ways.

Yours in the Master's service

Rev Alastair Gray, Interim Moderator

Youth Group

It's my pleasure to write this just after the Quiz Night which raised an amazing £700! I would like to thank all who turned to support us and all who supported through donations. I would also like to extend a special thank you to Phil and Diane Morrison for donating the prize money as well. This was exceptionally generous. The generosity and support shown by you all for this event has been greatly appreciated, and really shows how valued the Youth Group is within (and outwith) the church and the great Christian community spirit we have in our congregations.

The Youth Group's been ticking over as usual, except with no production this year there's been no rehearsals so all of us leaders still have our hair intact. We have had, and will have some interesting talks coming up so watch this space. As always, if you know of any young folk looking for a place to go on a Sunday night then please encourage them to come along. We're open to everyone and would love a new member or two.

Thank you all once again for all your support this past year and we look forward to what the future holds.

Michael Newlands

Sunday Club

There's been lots of different craft work and posters have been made to decorate the hall. We've learned about the baptism of Jesus and the miracles he performed. We've heard about how Jesus loves us all, no matter who we are. We've learned about the 12 Disciples and the Last Supper. We also made gifts for Mother's Day and plan to give some flower arrangements and cards to hospital patients. We've also made posters to decorate the church for Easter.

The door is always open to anyone who would like to chat about Sunday Club or who might be willing to volunteer, even on a temporary basis. Sunday Club is for any child aged between 3 and 12 years old who can come along any time to join us.

Beth Inglis, Leader

Vacancy

Efforts to find our next minister continue and the post has been re-advertised in April's Life and Work. As many of you know, there are many vacant parishes in Scotland, some of which have lain empty for several years, so the task ahead is not easy but we continue in our mission with hope, faith and optimism.

Fiona Simpson, chairman of the Nominating Committee.

News from the Guild

The Guild has had a wide variety of speakers over the past months. Rev Shuna Dicks gave a very thought provoking talk on her time in Greece helping at a refugee camp. It put our own problems into perspective. Joyce Dawson came along in January accompanied by her talented group of children to help us celebrate Scots Night. We were given an illustrated talk by Janet Benson on her visit to China and Colin Hunter stepped in at short notice to give a very entertaining talk on his time in the police force as a dog handler. The World Day of Prayer service took place this year in the North Church and was very well attended by our Guild members. Tesco very kindly invited us to visit their store at the beginning of March and this proved very informative. Our annual coffee morning was very well attended and we raised a fantastic sum of £1046. At our AGM Norma updated us on the six Guild Projects which we support by money raised from our annual sponsored walk and silence which takes place annually in May. The last event of the year is the Spring Evening on Monday, 3rd April which is open to everyone and the Huntly Quines will be providing the entertainment. Our new programme will start in September and meetings are open to both men and women. Why don't you come along and see what we are all about? You will be given a warm welcome.

Joan MacBeath

Forthcoming Services

Monday 10th-Friday 14th April - Holy Week Services at St Rufus, 7pm

Sunday, 16th April – United Easter Service at St Rufus, 10.15am

Sunday, 30th April - Holy Communion at St Rufus 10.15am and 6pm; Botriphnie 11.45am

Sunday, 7th May – Holy Communion at Grange, 11.45am.

Parish Register to 31st March 2017

Funerals

November - Kath Duncan

Helen Dean

December - Derek Logie

Lona Thomson

January - James Gray

Gerald Findlay

Davy Mckenzie

Laura Buchan

James Watson

February - Isobel Robertson

Victor Mamwell