

Springwells Magazine – Advent Sunday to Ash Wednesday

Dear Friends

When I began ordained Ministry, over 30 years ago now, I had those dreams and ambitions, shared by many as they start out in new ventures and journeys, that I was going to make a real impact on the church and the world. Such was the enthusiasm and delusion of youth.

Over time the grand vision and vaulting ambition began to fade and recede into something much more modest and attainable. Perhaps I was only living through what Carl Jung described as the transition from the 'first-half' of life to the 'second-half' of life. This transition is often accompanied with the acceptance of our limitations, weaknesses and inadequacies.

As I listen to the news and the long list of problems, challenges and crises that our world is facing at the moment, I am often left feeling overwhelmed and powerless in the face of them. There is the ever-present temptation to just pull down the shutters and hope that it all goes away. What can I do about the plight of the countless poor? How can my actions undo centuries of institutional racism and prejudice? Can my feeble efforts turn the tide of environmental damage?

The truth is probably very little. But that must not deter me and anyone else from doing what they can do. As Dorothy Day, the American social activist said:

People say, what is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.

I might not be able to feed the world's poor, but I can feed the hungry person in front of me. I cannot roll back the tide of racism but I can show respect to whoever I meet today. I cannot heal the world of its seeming selfishness and thoughtless wasteful consumption, but I can live simply and share what I have. To complete Day's quote:

A pebble cast in a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds are like that. No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do.

Jesus never asked us to change the world, he asked us to change ourselves and that can be an almighty challenge. We don't like doing that, we don't want to do that, yet if God's Kingdom is to come and the world to be a better place it needs to start with we ourselves changing. Changing in small, maybe seemingly insignificant ways. Each day working and praying that we give more than we take, we commend more than we condemn, we praise more than we blame, and we do more good than ill. That doesn't sound too radical does it?

These foundation stones build for strong loving, accepting, caring and nurturing communities. A place where praise not criticism is the default position; is a place

where amazing things have room to bud and flourish. A place where people give and do out of love and thanksgiving, not grudgingly or looking for the thanks that is due to God alone; is a place where everyone feels they can play their part and are valued. A place of working and praying; is a place where God not only resides but also a place where others see God as alive and relevant in the world.

We can make a difference each and everyone of us, in our lives, in the church, in the community and in the world, we just need to remember to put God not self first. That is the message of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Just look what can happen when God is the focus of our lives.

May God bless and keep you.

Kirstin

CoVid19 Procedures

I fully recognise that there are those who do not yet feel comfortable coming back to church yet, the rise in cases currently will be adding to that along with the colder weather and the winter bugs which are beginning their rounds once more after a year off.

If you do wish to come to church we ask you to observe the following:

- ◆ Please wear a facemask throughout the building unless you are exempt.
- ◆ Please use the hand sanitiser when you arrive and leave, also before and after receiving communion. Communion is currently only shared in one kind.
- ◆ Please respect other people's wishes with regard to keeping distance and touching.
- ◆ Please do not come to church if you have a cold or cough, even if you do not have CoVid. Keeping the spread of all virus' will be vital this winter for those who are more vulnerable.
- ◆ You will be asked to record your name and contact details at the back of the church should we need to provide it for test and protect. The lists will be destroyed after 21 days.
- ◆ If you have any concerns about our procedures or the implementation of them please speak to either Kirstin or Geoff, thank you.

This magazine has been printed on recycled unbleached paper if you do not wish to keep it please recycle of you can also shred it an add it to your compost heap.

Service Arrangements

Thank you to all those who engaged in the discussion at the AGM about service provision and what it might be in the future. For the winter period we are going to keep the services as they currently are. At St Paul & St John the Evangelist at 11am and 10.30am at Holy Name with Geoff and Ray taking the services from Reserved Sacrament every other week. You can see the list of services, including mid week services in the centre pages of this magazine.

The change, to two services, one in each congregation, coming into effect from Lent 1, Sunday 6th March. A final decision hasn't yet been taken but will be communicated in plenty of time via the web site, facebook page, announcements and noticeboards at church and another mailing during February next year.

At Christmas there will be a joint service on Christmas Eve at St Paul and St John the Evangelist at 7.30pm, the same time as last year. On Christmas Day there will be a joint service at Holy Name at 11am. On Sunday 26th December there will be the usual Sung Eucharist at St Paul & St John the Evangelist at 11am, when we shall remember St John the Evangelist whose feast day falls on the 27th. The Patronal Festival of the congregation will be held on the Sunday nearest 10th of October the date the congregations united.

At 10.30am on Sunday the 2nd of January we will have a joint service at Holy Name for their Patronal Feast. While at the end of this period we will end with a joint service in Monklands at 11am on Sunday 27th February, Transfiguration Sunday.

If you would like to attend any of the joint services at Holy Name but require transport please let us know and we will endeavour to arrange it.

Wrap Up Lanarkshire

Thank you to those who gifted coats for the Wrap Up Lanarkshire Appeal. The campaign which provides winter coats to anyone in need of one and we are involved through the Rotary Club.

When John came to load up his boot full of the coats that had been collected he also left 100 purple crocus bulbs which have been planted in the grass in front of the church, John writes:

For many years now Rotary International has been fighting a war on Polio. So far we have managed to reduce its occurrence to Afghanistan and Pakistan. To highlight this campaign Rotary clubs throughout Great Britain have been planting purple crocuses. (This colour was chosen as when a child is vaccinated in the third world his or her pinkie is dipped in purple dye to ensure they don't get vaccinated again.) Our club has been involved in this campaign (you may have seen the crocuses in the West End Park). This year we are once again taking part and have purchased a quantity of crocus corms for planting. As a thank you for your support in the Wrap up Lanarkshire appeal we would like to offer you some of these corms to plant in your grounds.

Look out for them popping their heads out in the new year to celebrate another life saved from the pain, discomfort and limiting effects of polio.

Special Services for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

You are invited to join me for **Advent Morning Prayers** every morning except Sunday from Monday 29th November till Friday 24th December. The prayers take the form of music, image, word and silence and last around 10 minutes. Come as you are, in your housecoat, with your rollers still in, unshaven, with your hot water bottle or cup of coffee. This start to the day is not meant to be taxing or a chore but rather a gentle start to the day without having to worry about getting ready or getting somewhere first. So you are invited to join me on Zoom.

The meeting number is 876 2390 7573 and the password Angels. If you would like an invite emailed to you for one click entry please ask. If you would like help in using Zoom, please ask.

In the church on Wednesday 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd of December beginning at 7pm there will be **Compline with an Advent Reflections**. The Reflections will be considering the Biblical Songs of Hope.

1st December - Moses' song.

8th December - Isaiah's song.

15th December - Zechariah's song.

22nd December - Mary's song.

Sunday 19th December is Advent 4 and at 4pm there will be a **Service of Lessons and Carols**. The choir will lead us in some of our favourite carols as we once more hear the Bible account of God's promise and revelation in the incarnation. The service will be followed by refreshments.

On Tuesday 21st December, the shortest day of the year, at 7pm there will be a **Blue Christmas Service** for those who find all the tinsel and jollity of Christmas difficult or painful.

The service which lasts around 30 minutes is a time to remember those who we will miss this Christmas. A time to pause and reflect on the sadness in the world. A time to remember that Jesus came to comfort the broken hearted, lift up the fallen, and heal

the pain that can not be spoken of.

There is no requirement to join in, you can simply just come and be.

Into next year there will be a **Eucharist for Epiphany** at 7pm on Thursday 6th January followed by refreshments. Having joined the Magi in following the star we will rejoice with them as the season begins to change.

Then to mark the end of the greater season of Christmas the Wednesday morning Eucharist on 2nd February will mark **Candlemas**, when Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple and Simeon and Anna recognised the Christ Child as the Light they had been waiting and praying for. At this service the candles which will be used during the year in the church will be blessed.

Internet Presence

Although you personally may not be connected via the internet you will know someone who is. The internet is often the way to find the most up to date information concerning St Paul and St John the Evangelist. In recent months the web site has had a wee make over and the facebook page is being used to inform people about up coming services and also snippets about Scottish saints and faith.

The facebook page is www.facebook.com/monklandseiscopal you don't need to have a facebook account to view it. If you do have an account and you haven't yet liked and followed us, please do.

If you haven't had a look for a while I would also invite you to pop along to the web site the address is monklands.church.scot

The web site will have a growing collection of pdf's of liturgies for those who would rather bring the service on an electronic device, links to the liturgy you may need for any given Sunday will be provided during the week prior on the facebook page, or on the front page of the web site next to the service notification.

Over the coming weeks and months it is hoped that we will be able to add a page with some snippets from the service which will be available in audio and hopefully also limited video. For now any such items will be only when Kirstin is present in church and will be recorded rather than live streaming.

If there is anything you would like to see on the web site that isn't currently there, please let us know. It is currently still a work in progress.

ps—can you help? Do you have any old photographs of St John the Evangelist Coatbridge or St Andrew, Gartcosh; to add to the website? If so would you be happy to lend them to me? They would be scanned and returned, unless you didn't wish them back.

AGM

The AGM took place after the service on Sunday 14th November. Thanks were expressed to all those who had helped with the smooth running of the church during the interregnum.

Ann reported, on behalf of her team, that the finances were down because of the pandemic however with diocesan assistance we were managing.

Allison returned to the vestry after completing her term and Ronnie was re-elected as your Lay Representative. Tracey has become our Alternate Lay Representative.

There was a discussion about future service provision, coffee and tea after the service, and thank you letters from those who had received fund raising from the congregation were read out.

Next years AGM is pencilled in for Sunday 6th November after the service.

Purple Friday

Have you heard about Purple Friday? No? Neither had I until recently. This comes from their web site which you can find at www.purplefriday.org/

We are LGBT Youth Scotland and Purple Friday is our annual fundraising day.

At LGBT Youth Scotland we believe that an even better Scotland is possible and that, with your support, we can be here for even more LGBTI young people and make Scotland the best place for them to grow up.

As Scotland's national LGBTI youth work charity, we support thousands of young people every year, providing a lifeline of support and opportunities - through in-person and on-line youth groups and one-to-one support. We also work with schools and organisations through our LGBT Charter Programme to help them to proactively include LGBTI people in every aspect of their work and school.

We rely on donations to keep these vital services going, and that's where you come in!

Named after the purple (spirit) stripe in the Rainbow Flag, Purple Friday is our

annual fundraising day. It celebrates the spirit of the LGBTI community and harnesses the support of their allies. Allies like you!

On Purple Friday we are asking you to join us, fundraise for our work and send a message to LGBTI young people all over Scotland that they are loved and supported.

Purple Friday is 25th of February next year and the main idea is to walk the equivalent of the Scottish coastline in that 24 hours. Of course they are not expecting anyone to do that themselves in that time frame so, just like the Olympics the torch is passed on, together over the course of the day the 1553 miles will hopefully be completed. By helping each other to complete the walk, walkers know they are not alone, even if they are walking by themselves. And through our walking we in turn are letting the young LGBTI community in Scotland know that they are not alone.

The aim of the day is to raise a very modest £20,000 to continue their work. And you can help. How you might be wondering, well.

I am going to walk 10,000 steps on 25th February which is the equivalent of 7.2 miles which is the distance between St Paul & St John the Evangelist and Holy Name. The road is hardly one to be walking along, so I will be walking 7 times around Lochend Loch in Drumpellier Park instead. You can support me, by walking part of the distance for me or by donating; you can come along and cheer me on, on the day, bring me a cup of coffee, or a plaster for my blisters, or both. By committing to 10,000 steps I am also committing to raising at least £100.

More details will be available in the church after Christmas, and thank you in advance.

Small Steps, Big Difference.

Bishop John Taylor RIP

Many of you will no doubt remember +John who was our diocesan bishop from 1991-1998. In recent years he lived in Kirriemuir, and it was there that he died on Thursday, 18 November 2021, aged 89.

Upon the news of Bishop John's death, Bishop Kevin said: "Just as Bishop John began his episcopal ministry in Glasgow and Galloway, I began setting up the first Provincial-wide Discernment, Selection and Recruitment process. Bishop John's kindness and encouragement were a great help to me in establishing the post of Provincial Director of Ordinands. His kindness was matched by his

wisdom and, through the College of Bishops, his holiness was a gift to all. Both he and his secretary Monica provided me with much-needed support and confidence. We thank God for Bishop John's ministry among us."

Bishop John was ordained to the priesthood in 1957, and served as Curate at St Margaret of Scotland, Aberdeen before becoming Curate in Charge and then Rector at Holy Cross, Glasgow. He remained in the Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway for the rest of his active ministry, including many years as Rector at St Ninian Glasgow and then at St John the Evangelist, Dumfries.

He served as a Canon of St Mary's Cathedral in Glasgow from 1979.

Upon the Death of Bishop John Taylor

The bell tolls
marking more than a death,
a life of faith well lived.
The sombre timbre
resonates our grief,
recalls voice and gentle smile,
word of encouragement, blessing, prayer.
Hands that laid on others
passing on The Great Commission,
anointing, blessing, serving_
God and God in all;
have found their rest.

Within its peal
a brighter resonance marks
a uniting one final time.
Hope realised,
faith completed,
the final communion
of body, blood and spirit;
united to the great I AM,
who is all in all,
in life and death.

Please remember in your prayers Edna and the rest of the family during this time.

May +John rest in peace
and rise in glory.

Truth and Hope

Truth,
mark of the Maker;
unyielding through time,
unfaltering across space,
unqualified perpetually.

Hope,
ambulant sigh of the Spirit;
drawing out truth veiled by human ornamentation,
removing the *i'm* from impossible,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver
binding to release. .

Golden thread of unbreakable love.
With Hope - truth is found.
With Truth - hope is eternal.
With Love - chaos is beautified into life.

For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God.

Colossians 1:4-6



Carols

Many of our Christmas Carols are amongst the favourite hymns that people pick when asked, be it the peaceful prayerfulness of 'Silent Night', or the joyful exclamation of 'Hark! The Herald Angel Sing'.

Some carols are not quite what they first appear. 'Once in Royal David's City' in the first verse tells of Mary's laying Jesus in the manger, while the fact that it goes onto talk about his death and reign in heaven makes it a wonderful choice for a funeral hymn also! Of course if you want to sing about shepherds you can't go far wrong with 'While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night'. Yet they wouldn't have been on the hillsides in December.

Then there are those Magi, the myth makers of the Christmas/Epiphany story, 'We Three Kings of Orient Are' is probably the most well known for populating the idea that there were three of them and they were Kings. Talking about myths there is a mistaken notion that carols like the decorations had to disappear once Epiphany was upon us, carols in fact can and should be sung up until Candlemas.

It is at Candlemas the mood turns from the joy of a birth to looking towards a death.

It is at Candlemas the final piece in the Christmas jigsaw slots into place and two pious Jews recognise that the Messiah is now among them.

It is at Candlemas that the joyful carols cease and the church prepares for the more sombre mood of the season of Lent to begin.

Until Candlemas the carols will ring and be sung.