



St. Matthew's Church Perth

e- Newsletter No. 43

Fri 28th May

Dear All

This week Janet Martin spoke about the hot topic of the week- and that was **Saints!**

As she explained the word "saint" is derived from "sanctus" meaning "holy" and the procedure for sanctifying someone in the Roman Catholic Church is a long drawn-out affair commencing, at the earliest, 5 years after someone has died.

As it says in 1 Corinthians 1:2 God calls us all to be holy and it was interesting to chat afterwards about the 10 Modern Martyrs whose statues were unveiled in 1998 in Westminster Abbey - a Quiz question if ever I heard one!

These Martyrs are drawn from every continent and many Christian denominations and represent all who have been oppressed or persecuted for their faith. Among them are victims of Nazism, communism and religious prejudice in the 20th century. They include civil rights leader Dr Martin Luther King Jr and St Oscar Romero, Archbishop in El Salvador, both of whom were assassinated; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, killed by the Nazis in 1945; and Wang Zhiming, a pastor killed during the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

There are also lesser-known Martyrs –

- St Maximilian Kolbe from Poland who offered his life to save a fellow prisoner in Auschwitz-Birkenau and died there in 1941
- Manche Masemola from South Africa who was murdered by her parents when she refused to desist from attending an Anglican Church
- Esther John from Pakistan who became a Christian and was brutally murdered in mysterious circumstances
- Archbishop Janani Luwum from Uganda who protested to Idi Amin about the pervasive violence and corruption in the country and who was then murdered
- Lucien Tapiedi, a missionary from Papua New Guinea, who died at the hands of the Japanese in the 2WW
- Grand Duchess Elizabeth from Russia, a granddaughter of Queen Victoria, who joined a Russian Orthodox Convent after her husband

was assassinated and was, in turn, murdered by the Bolsheviks.

Janet ended with this poem "What does the world need right now?" by Jocelyn Soriano:

*We need more saints who are not afraid,
saints who are not afraid to speak the truth
where truth is needed.*

*- we need more saints who are merciful,
saints who will not so easily judge,
or cast away or condemn.*

*Saints who can understand grief and loss,
who know how it is to be empty,
poor and forgotten, to be without love,
just when you need it most.*

*Saints who boast not only of their own righteousness,
knowing that every good thing comes from God only,
comes from His love.*

*For this is indeed what the world needs now,
Saints who are ready to give as He gives,
to live as He lives and to
love as He has always loved.*

**Are you searching for God,
but do not know where to look?
Don't worry—God knows where you are.**

**Are you searching for faith,
but do not know what to believe?
Don't worry—you are not alone.**

**Would you love to be able to sing,
but do not have the voice for it?
Don't worry—the angels are giving it laldy!**

**Would you love to be able to pray,
but cannot find the words?
Don't worry—Christ is praying for you.
Amen
(from "Spill the Beans")**





DIARY

Sunday: Live streamed Worship from 10.45
ID 953 7532 1288 Pass code 058724

Monday: Coffee and Chat 11.00
ID: 930 1458 2081

Wednesday: Meditation 9.00
ID: 977 1495 2443

All the above can be accessed using the telephone by dialling : 0131 460 1196 And enter ID, and Pass Code where required, above when requested.

To Unmute yourself press *6

Quick link for Sunday Worship
<https://zoom.us/j/95375321288?pwd=Z0ZQckF2dEVpcmNUTWtPdmZxeUhGQT09>

NO NEED TO BOOK FOR CHURCH NOW .

- JUST TURN UP FOR 11AM!

Walking Group



Contrary to the intimation in the last newsletter, our June walk (on Saturday June 5th) will be led by Joyce and Marjorie. (Tom will lead the July walk) The walk will take us through the Methven Woods to Dalcrue, crossing the bridge over the River Almond, along the other side of the river to Pitcairngreen, then back to Almondbank via fields and a river 'cliff-top' walk. The walk is about 5 - 6 miles, with some undulation but no steep climbs, and plenty of variety. Leaving at 10a.m. from the Main Street in Almondbank, we will have both a coffee and a lunch stop, so please come prepared!

We welcome new walkers - but in order to comply with Track and Trace, we do need to know beforehand the names of everyone who intends to join this walk. So please let Marjorie know no later than Friday 4th - tel. 07788 852908, or e-mail marjorie.clark@btinternet.

NOTICES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Belated Birthday Congratulations are sent to:

Rita Dalton for 19th May

And **Muriel Smith** for 24th May



Christian Aid

The congregation put in a tremendous effort over Christian Aid week and managed to raise £842.17. This was from the retiral offering, donations and the quiz.

The latter was a big success with folk working in teams on zoom to answer questions set by Marjorie Clark. The quiz was open to all congregations in the Perth Christian Aid network but only one team led by Elizabeth Sime from Letham St Marks entered. It was probably just as well since they won by a very small margin! Special thanks should go to Andrew Davies who gathered his friends to create a team. Unfortunately most of the questions dated to an age before they were born but they ploughed stoically on. Well done to the younger generation.

Jean Young

Watergate Holiday Flat



Due to Covid lockdown there are a number of weeks available to let during the remaining weeks of 2021. Full details of the flat can be found on the Sykes Cottages Website at [Watergate | Perth | Self Catering Holiday Cottage \(sykescottages.co.uk\)](http://Watergate | Perth | Self Catering Holiday Cottage (sykescottages.co.uk))

If you have relatives or friends looking for a holiday in Perth, please encourage them to consider the church flat. If you would like to visit the flat see Tom to arrange a visit.



ISAIAH 58:11

And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never runs dry.

A Little bit of Support

These last few weeks have seen a period of unseasonably cold and wet weather but I'm sure we are in for better times now. All the rain sure has made stuff grow so get your plant supports in place now, before the new growth becomes too advanced, give it support. Tall perennials appreciate support frames to prevent them from blowing over when they reach full size. Place canes or metal stakes or twiggy branches over and around clumps now. These hold stems upright but will be hidden from view as the leaves grow. You could use horizontal nets stretched over a whole herbaceous border. Individual stems of Delphiniums and other tall plants can be also supported using taller stakes or metal loops available in various heights. Just push the support into the soil beside the plants and tie in if required. Take care not to damage the stems, use a figure of eight with soft twine. You might even try a few homemade supports if you have any hazel or willow prunings. It seems a shame not to put them to use.

Every year peonies proudly display their magnificent blooms only to 'flop' unceremoniously with the first heavy rain. This can be prevented by providing proper support. The large blooms of the plant can often become too heavy for the stem alone to support them. While drooping blooms will not actually kill the plant, they will shorten the life span. Install some support just now while the growth is small and it will be hidden as they grow. Use small canes or choose from the huge selection of garden supports available.

It's also worth checking the new growth on climbers and tying it in as it grows to avoid damage.

Chuckle corner



Tom Shields produced 3 books of entertaining stories and pictures sent into his column in the Glasgow Herald in the 1990s. Here are some to brighten your day.

Overheard in a pizza restaurant "Give me a big pizza with extra trimmings please", "Do you want it cut into four or eight?" asks the waiter. "Better make it four, I don't think I could manage eight".

Overheard Malaprops to savour

Customer in fabric shop complained to the staff that she couldn't see the true colour of the fabric due to the effervescent lights.

A student, who told her friend that she fancied going to Israel to live on a 'kebab' for a year.

Man on bus heard telling his friend he was going to hospital for a 'Bavarian' meal.

A lady on the train into Edinburgh pointed out Murrayfield Stadium and Jenner's 'Suppository'.

An English holiday maker in Russia struggling with the language, said he was confused by the 'acrylic' alphabet.

An elderly lady out walking her dogs informed a chap who stopped to pat the dogs, that one was a Corgi and the other a 'Datsun'.

The apprentice brickie who told his boss he wasn't keen to go up the scaffolding as he suffered from 'vertebrae'.

One lady, when asked for a mutual friend's telephone number replied "Oh I can't give you that, she's 'hysterectomy!'"

Janet Martin

News from First Presbyterian, Fernandina Beach

I was delighted a fortnight ago to be able to take part in a Zoom call with our sister church, First Presbyterian in Fernandina Beach in Florida; I had the privilege of visiting there a couple of years ago, and it was good to catch up with the Associate Pastor,



Julie Higbee, my friend Diane Watkins and other members of their Global Outreach committee. Like us, their church has been closed for significant periods during lockdown; most of them have now been vaccinated, and the church is now open again for worship, but again, like us, they are spatially distanced, wearing masks and still not allowed to sing. And like us, they have embraced and learnt to use technology as they live-stream their services to those who cannot or do not feel comfortable attending worship yet.

And the similarities do not end there. They too are currently looking for a new minister, as Rev Dr Wain Wesbery demitted office last year. It is interesting to note these parallels, as we both talked about our parish profiles, and they have, just this past Sunday, elected their Nominating Committee who will spearhead the search for a new pastor. Hopefully we will be close behind them!

This special partnership came about partly because of the pulpit exchanges between Wain and our former minister Scott. With both ministers no longer in these charges, on the Zoom call, we talked about how we could maintain and even deepen the relationship between the two congregations. One idea which became very obvious to me as we spoke, (and was enthusiastically endorsed), was “Why don’t we do more Zoom calls like this?” It would be great if we could get a core group who would be willing to spend time sharing with a group from Fernandina Beach,

getting to know each other, and finding common ground.

Also, one of their group Marcus Yew is keen to find people who would be willing to be pen-pals with members of their congregation – yes, using the old-fashioned pen and paper and writing letters to each other! Andrew Davies has already indicated he’s at the front of the queue – is anyone else interested? If so, please let me know. From potential pen-pals, Marcus needs to know: full name, mailing address and a few areas of interest (hobbies, interests, pets, etc). Last but not least, our newsletter is now being sent to Julie who will share it with their congregation, and we hope, will contribute some articles for us to read in the weeks and months to come.

Prior to lockdown, a small group from the church in Fernandina Beach had been planning to visit Perth – that had to be put on hold but it may yet happen once this is all over. In the meantime, it would be wonderful if we can develop our relationship – and as Marcus says “May God use this initiative to bring our distant churches closer, and to feed the souls of those who participate.”

Anyone else interested? Please let me know!

Marjorie Clark Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com

STEWARDSHIP

As Stewardship Convener I have been concerned with the ongoing Stewardship of the congregation.

Thank you to those who make their offering through standing orders and gift aid.

However, this is an appeal to those of you who give your offering by the free will offering envelopes (WFO) and in the open plate.

The easiest and most practical method for the Treasurer is to make payments through the bank. This can be done online by making a Standing Order or simply making a BACS (bank transfer) payment.

The bank details are as follows:

Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland
Account Name: St. Matthew's Church
Sort Code: 83-47-00
Account Number: 00760133

Talking Ministry: Christ cares

Jean and Raymond Young's son who is a Church of Scotland youth worker in Glasgow has spoken of "the absolute privilege" of working with young people, including helping to reduce violence and provide better opportunities for those growing up locally.



Youth team leader Neil Young next to the first piece of public art in Blackhill in 15 years painted by Rogue One.

Neil Young, who is the youth team leader at St Paul's Church of Scotland in the north-east of the city, paid tribute to those he has walked alongside with over the last twenty years.

"I am not an expert on young people - young people are the experts on young people," he said. "Anything that has worked has been because they're leading as they know what they're talking about. All I've ever known is young people wanting people to be interested in them, not in our agendas. Then we are able to tell them that God is even more interested in them, that they are made in the image of God and that God loves them."

Reflecting on his time at St Paul's, Mr Young, described the work done locally to help stop youth crime as the "biggest highlight" for the community.

He said "We used to have to take knives off young people as they came into the building to create a safe space - one of the first months we were here a kid came in with a 5cm gash in his head. We thought we're not putting up with this as a community and I managed to get funding to address this. What the young people wanted was something to do on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday night.

The father of three said that the Church was able to support people over the long-term to help them to overcome sometimes difficult circumstances.

"One of the beauties of the church is we're not a three- or six-month project - we're here for the long-haul. God is eternal," he said.

"When all the other services are pulling out of our parish the only thing that's constant is God and the Church of Scotland. I love that aspect of it."

Mr Young, who is married to Libby, explained that his experience of youth work had taught him that it is "OK to fail" and it is important to listen.

What started as a job mainly doing school chaplaincy and running a youth club once a week has now expanded into a missional organisation with 17 full-time equivalent staff.

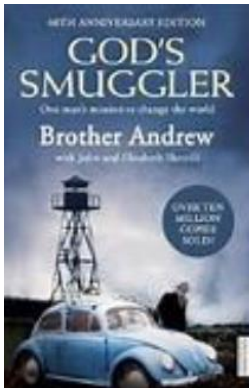
Amongst many different strands of work, St Paul's have also been involved with tackling food insecurity, a 'walking and wheeling' project to improve people's transport options, and running Bolt FM, Scotland's longest running youth radio station.

For many years St Paul's have been twinned with a congregation in Zambia, which has given young people the chance to visit Southern Africa and gain a fresh perspective.

"My faith shapes all of my life. Matthew 25 inspires my work, when it says in the Bible "**for I was hungry and you fed me**" in our parish, the Church is the lead organisation tackling this - Jesus told us very clearly this is what we need to do", Mr Young says. "Let's go and walk alongside all people and show them that Christ cares. It's the absolute privilege of my ministry."

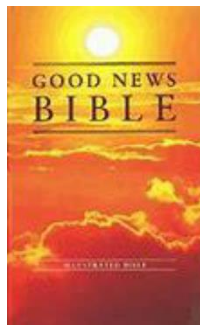
THE UNEXPECTED

*This is a column when different readers will tell us something unexpected about themselves. This week **Fiona Bruce** tells us about an episode from her student days:*



My friend, Elisabeth, and I were students in the 1970's and we were fired with enthusiasm by the book "God's Smuggler" where Brother Andrew smuggled Bibles into what was then still the USSR.

We understood that it was still very difficult for people to practise their faith in the USSR and that there was a lack of Bibles so we determined to do the same! We thought the "Good News" Bible would be a welcome offering.



Elisabeth had just finished her first year at University studying Russian so she at least had some idea of the language – which was useful.

We enrolled on a summer Student Exchange trip (of course, unfortunately the "exchange" seemed to be very much a one-way trip as no Russian students seemed to return!) and flew with our group of about 20 UK students by Aeroflot to Moscow in 1977.



I can't recall that we particularly hid the Bibles in our luggage and, looking back, we seemed quite blasé about going through Customs- and

maybe that stood us in good stead!

When we arrived in Moscow it was like entering another world with huge statues of Lenin everywhere and hotel blocks with an archetypal Russian "matron" sitting on a stool at the end of each corridor.

Of course, we had no idea where the underground churches might be situated so we simply hailed a taxi and asked the driver to take us to one! We did start to get quite concerned when more and more people

piled into this taxi as it took us to the outskirts of Moscow. I still get goosebumps writing this – the stupidity and naivety and danger of the whole idea!

Anyhow, we duly arrived at our destination and delivered our Bibles to some very concerned Christians. They wouldn't let us get a taxi back so one very kind lady took us on the Moscow underground till eventually we reached our hotel safely.

Obviously, this tale had a happy ending for us but, wow, was God looking after us that day!

Elizabeth (who sadly died a few years ago) became an award-winning poet and here is one of her poems about living in England and missing Scotland, about differences of landscape and weather:

LIKE

*The fog that is like but more rare
The wind that is like but not so sharp
The sand that is like but turns to mud
The hills that are like but more peopled
The flowers that are like but bloom earlier
The beach that is like but more crowded
The summers that are like but darken quickly
The air that is like but not so sweet*

Elizabeth Burns



The next edition of the Newsletter, No. 44 will be on **Friday 11th June 2021**. All contributions to FMBruce6@googlemail.com by **Monday 7th June 2021**