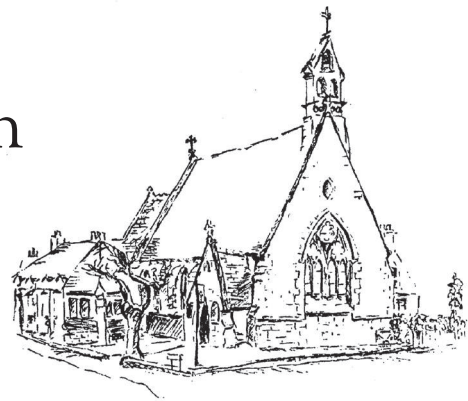


St.Saviour's Church, Bridge of Allan

Magazine



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Summer 2021



Dear Friends,

On Sunday I got a bit radical as I celebrated the Blessed Virgin Mary. Ordinarily this would involve dressing up in fine robes and making much fuss of the wonderful vestments which are so much a part of our identity. But the writings of Isaiah really struck me – the idea of the “garments of salvation,..robe of righteousness”

It also helped that I was quoting the wonderful naturalist Gerry Durrell;

“The world is as delicate and as complicated as a spider’s web. If you touch one thread you send shudders running through all the other threads. We’re not just touching the web, we’re tearing great holes in it...”

So, it seemed quite natural to wear jeans, trainers, a clerical shirt and my favourite Gerry Durrell t-shirt carrying this quotation.

And my point? Well, quite simply that this applies to climate change and conservation,

but it also applies to the rest of the mess of our world too – everything is connected – mental health, poverty, housing, black lives matter, LGBT+ rights, the mess in the Middle East.... I could go on. And this is brought (for me) biblically together when we hear the beautiful words of Mary in the Magnificat:

“He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly...”

And my question to us all?

How do we make our faith real? What will we stand up for? What is it that God calls us to really, quite literally stand up for?

And God’s challenge will come to us all in the coming months as we all seek to find the path for St. Saviour’s in the coming years – ‘What will mission and ministry look like in this place?’

I have been working closely with +Ian and Brendan Grimley (Diocesan Treasurer) to facilitate this

exploration. In the coming months the Vestry will begin to work with the questions that need to be asked about finances and mission and ministry – ‘What does this look like?’ And then all who wish to be involved will be welcomed to join that visioning, centring on what it is that the Holy Spirit is asking St. Saviour’s to do as community, in this place. Be assured that whilst the financial position is not without its challenges, it is also an excellent opportunity to really pray and plan together to explore where it is that St. Saviour’s is called to be in the coming years; and most importantly how that presence is to serve the people of this community.

So, as we orientate towards a new world, let us be reminded of the hope of God in the words of Mary, Mother of God; “He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty”. i.e., He has rebalanced the world, and is still asking us to do the same right here, right now.

Every Blessing, Jo.

Where is St Saviour’s at?

Alastair Williamson writes;

We have been able to attend services in Church for a few months now, albeit with restricted numbers under COVID guidelines. I personally have found these quiet, reflective services helpful and appropriate to the climate of the times. The Rector has continued her chaplaincy work with the University and Air Cadets, as well as day to day ministry in the Bridge of Allan community and congregational care, service preparation and Diocesan Committee and project work.

She chairs our regular Vestry meetings, which occur usually every 6 weeks or so, with an 8 week pause during June - August.

At Vestry, I think most are aware, we have been wrestling with financial concerns and ongoing maintenance costs of our buildings, after our reasonable accounting status was sharply depleted by the roof repair project. Despite success in obtaining substantial grant support from a number of sources, our own finances were heavily involved and we now have to rethink our plans. Congregational financial support is one of the planks on which the Church can build and plan ahead and we asked you to reassess your giving where possible and this has led to some increase in our income. But other actions are necessary too.

We have consulted the Diocesan Treasurer, a very enthusiastic and committed individual, who is helping us to brainstorm our way forward, developing an up-to-date mission and business plan. Churches tend to think through such a plan when they begin their ministry, but many fail to review and update their thinking as years go by.

St Saviour's is no exception and it is many years since we seriously reviewed our path. You may recall "Mission 21" as the latest mission strategy review, we undertook - and that was many years ago.

This time of upheaval, change, financial concern and new planning is a crossroads, and we face an exciting opportunity to go forward.

So, your Vestry, chaired by the Rector and facilitated by our Diocesan guide, will work on a mission plan for the way ahead and then present the outline to the congregation for their comment and hopefully approval.

The Rector has very clear plans for what she believes the role of St Saviour's to be within the community, and it's that phrase "in the community" that is telling.

We don't exist simply for our own spiritual support and guidance (essential though that is for us), we must follow the direction given to the disciples by Jesus to go out into the world with His message.

So, we will be working on this and so watch this space for more news.

Hello, Knitters and would-be Knitters!

Trish writes;

One of the lovely things about taking a Prayer Shawl to people in need, be it because of illness or loss, is the look of gratitude and pleasure that the recipients always show. People speak of the comfort it gives them to know that the people of St Saviour's, and in particular the knitter, is thinking of them and praying for them.

But at the moment, we are down to only two ready-to-go Prayer Shawls, and the thought of not having one to give as needed is very sad indeed! However, ... we do have four lots of yarn ready to be knitted up! The pattern is REALLY easy ... k3p3 over and over!

If you can help us out by knitting a shawl, please contact Trish at pijones1225@gmail.com or 832751. Many thanks!



Church Heating

Cedric Davies writes;

Further to the short article published in February the situation has moved on and clarified somewhat.

Since then we have engaged the consultant for the first stage investigation which was to carry out a heating survey and to present us with some heating options together with expected outline costs.

This has been done and we have chosen what we view as being the most practical and economic way forward which seeks to reduce substantially our overall carbon footprint.

There is in the vestry a virtually new gas boiler which has the capacity to provide conventional heating for the chancel which we view as a sensible way forward which helps to minimise costs. For the nave the proposal is to fit air source heat pump(s) which would be installed outside on the south facing wall of the nave with related heaters inside. This system will almost certainly demand some additional top up heating during the colder months probably provided by some form of more conventional electric heating the details of which are to be resolved at the design stage.

The cost of all this including consultancy fees and of course the dreaded VAT are expected to be in the region of £50,000.

An electric power supply for the new heating system appears now to be assured. A recent visit by Graham Robertson has confirmed that we have available in the porch a three phase power supply although only one phase of which is presently in use for lighting and sound.

In short, we have available what may be described as a light industrial power supply which should be more than adequate for our needs.

This all goes before the vestry at the next meeting and subject to approval will allow us to instruct the consultant to get the next stage underway. This will be the detail design and tender stage from which we hope to be able to choose a potential contractor. However, before anything further work can be authorised, we will need to pursue full grant funding so for the time being we are unable to give any form of reliable estimate of when the heating project might be completed.

Scotland's Gardens Plant Stall 6th June 2021

Sylvia Bromfield writes;

Gardens in Bridge of Allan opened for Charity for the first time in 2005 and St Saviour's have provided teas and run the Plant Stall almost every year since then, (apart from 2020 of course) and it has been a major fund raiser for the church. We agreed to provide the Plant Stall before we were really sure that any gardens could open but serving teas was never going to be an option. On the day, in fact eight gardens were open and also the allotments by the Haws Park.

We were very fortunate to receive a lot of plants left from Friends of Bridge of Allan Sale and Lecropt Church Car Boot Sale which gave us a good start to augment those donated by the congregation. A member of Scotland's Gardens local Committee brought more and several trays of tomato and chilli plants were also donated for us to sell, giving us a varied stock. We also thought that we could add to the proceeds by selling some home baking and preserves and St Saviour's came up trumps with a good selection.

We were blessed with excellent weather and a grand total of over £1900 was raised on the day. St Saviour's and Strathcarron Hospice each received a very welcome £574 and Scotland's Gardens Charities (The Queens Nursing Institute Scotland, Maggie's and Perennial) shared the rest. To quote Rev Jo "It was a joy-filled afternoon on so many levels". It was a great team effort, thank you everyone!

The Walking Group

Anne and Alastair Williamson write;

The Walking Group began in March 2004 as a result of a visit that Helen Mackay and I made to the University to view "Walk the Labyrinth" and other Health Workshops in December 2003.

We decided to include our church friends in weekly walks on Tuesdays. Numbers were small to begin with but over time increased (now 10 -12 average, even 20 on occasions of special interest!). Unfortunately, Helen couldn't take part due to a knee problem. Alastair joined the Group once he retired and has been a marvellous support to me, patiently putting up with the recess beforehand!

Walks have been many and varied, exploring towns and villages, local and beyond, but always including our home turf - the University! In 2007, we began our 'away trips' starting in Pitlochry, where we also visited the Festival Theatre to see "The Philadelphia Story" ("High Society" is a musical remake of it). Other towns and cities including abroad followed: Dunkeld (2008), Inverness (2009), Dunoon (2010), Newton Stewart (2011), Menorca (2012), London (2013 & 2014), Peebles (2015), Ibiza (2016), York (2017), Durham (2018) and the Rhine River Cruise, featuring Basel, Lucerne,

Breisach, Strasbourg, Rudesheim, Koblenz & Cologne (May 2019).

We have annual visits to see the lambs (Hampshire Downs) at a local farm on the Carse in January and Gargunock House Gardens to see the lovely snowdrops in February.

Our occasional theatre visits have been popular, and we have enjoyed "Hair Spray" and "Mac & Mabel" (both starring Michael Ball) and "Keep Dancing" in Edinburgh and "Billy Elliott" in London.

The Christmas Lunches are now well known and supported by most of the congregation, being held in a local venue and enjoyed by all.

During the pandemic we became a 'Virtual Walking Group', sending photos of our own walks to the "Wu" (Walkers United WhatsApp) or by email, which became a global exercise involving friends and relatives in the U.S.A. and Australia, as well as the Isle of Man & Shetland.

A dance was composed for future participation round the room!

We have now produced a calendar for 2022 from some of these wonderful photographs. All proceeds from the sale of the calendars (£10 each) will be divided equally between Aberlour Childcare Trust and St. Saviour's Church. We will be selling them during August (every Tuesday at 12noon in the Memorial Park entrance, Bridge of Allan).

We hope to resume the Walking Group in the autumn, guidelines permitting. New members will be most welcome! Contact: Anne or Alastair Williamson.



Westminster Abbey, London (April 2013).



Pitlochry Festival Theatre (June 2007).



London Eye (Dec. 2014).



Outside Franks' house at start of each walk. (Nov. 2004).

Dawyck Botanical Gardens NR Peebles (June, 2015).



Christmas Lunch (Dec 2004).

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE 2021

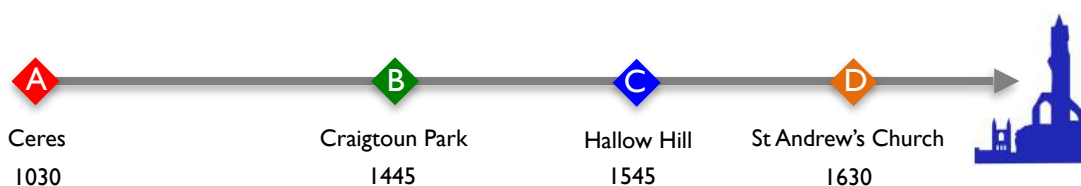


Longer pilgrimages have had to be postponed but the final section of the Fife Pilgrim Way will be walked on Friday 10 September this year, ending at the Cathedral ruins in St Andrews, then with refreshments and Evensong at All Saints' Church, nearby.

Destroyed during the Scottish Reformation, St Andrews Cathedral was consecrated in July 1318, the largest church in Scotland, and had already been a major pilgrimage destination for centuries for Christians from all over Europe. The Cathedral ruins remain an attraction for tourists and pilgrims from all over the world, with a renewed spiritual emphasis supported by new pilgrim routes, like the FPW.

Different pilgrimage options have been provided to encourage participation from those with a wide range of mobility requirements and ages, along the different stages of the route. There will be places to rest and pray on the route and each stage will begin with a short act of worship during which any additional pilgrims will be welcomed and incorporated.

- ❖ **OPTION A** would suit those who are used to walking longer distances - **over 10 miles** - covering some rough farm tracks, rural, woodland and urban paths, with some sustained hills to climb (transport back to Ceres will be provided for those who park at the start of this option).
- ❖ **OPTION B** would suit those who are comfortable with some rougher sections, sloping surfaces and a distance of about **4-5 miles** along country and urban paths. It starts at Craigtoun Country Park so could be part of a longer day out with children able to walk - or be carried - with an adult group (transport back to Craigtoun will be provided for those who park at the start of this option).
- ❖ **OPTION C** would suit those who are comfortable with up to a **3 mile** route in a fairly flat, urban setting on fairly good tarmac and paved surfaces.
- ❖ **OPTION D** would suit those who are comfortable with a distance of about **half a mile**, in a flat, urban setting along pavements and the paths and cut grass of the Cathedral ruins.



Our Beautiful Church Garden Has A Big Problem.

Maggie Moss writes;

Our beautiful church garden has a big problem: a dwindling team. This is due quite simply to the fact that we are all growing older, bringing infirmities and causing several members to do less or give up completely.

In some cases a husband has died, leaving one person to soldier on alone for the allotted month. In other cases, one person has had to do two months and it is, quite simply, too much. We need more people.

Now that the garden is open to the village and has wheelchair access, it is more important than ever to maintain it looking cherished. We cannot continue as at present. Thoughts please.

Mill of Keir - Open Studio

Mike Horne writes;

Each year “craftspeople” from all over Scotland open their studios for a week to demonstrate their skills to the public. For many years St Saviour’s Church opened its doors for the event. This year, due to Covid restrictions, the event was scaled down to just a single weekend and studios were open only where it was possible to receive visitors outdoors.

Sue opened Mill of Keir intending to demonstrate spinning and weaving skills but most of the conversations centred around the dyeing processes using only natural dyes grown in her herb/poison/weed garden. In particular wool and silk, dyed with either woad or Reseda, both of which grow well in this area and were used traditionally, attracted much attention.

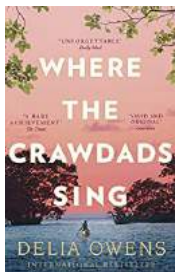
The weekend was very well attended and enjoyable with no casualties resulting from imperfect plant identification. Next year the focus may well be more on dyeing techniques and herbal medicines in view of the interest shown in these. Be warned!



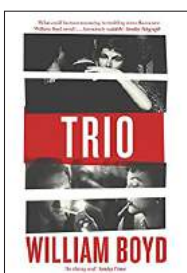
Book Group

Pam Bridgewater writes;

At the moment members of the Book Group are enjoying meeting in each other’s gardens after months of communicating by e-mail. The following books have been discussed since the last report.



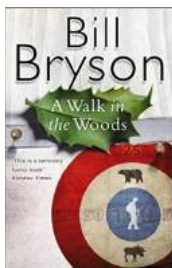
Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owen. This beautifully written book tells the story of 6 years old Kya who is abandoned in a shack on the marshlands of Carolina. Her resilience and resourcefulness, along with the kindness of a few locals, carry her through many trials and tribulations. We were all gripped, appalled, captivated and finally relieved as the various threads of the story were brought together. Then three pages before the end what a final twist! This is a book that we all highly recommend.



Trio by William Boyd. In this story William Boyd unravels the double lives and problems of a film crew working in Brighton in 1968, a time of increased freedoms and political upheaval. There were moments of humour and sympathy for a few characters but some of their dysfunctional behaviour definitely tried our patience. We gave this book rather mixed reviews.



Poetry of Judith Wright. As only a few of us were available for this meeting just one poem South of my Days was chosen to catch a glimpse of Judith Wright's Australia. The enjoyable discussion included a general chat about Australia amply illustrated by interesting holiday photos.



A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson. This book was chosen as a lockdown read, an escape onto the Appalachian Trail, the longest footpath in the world. Its 2,150 miles of track run from Georgia to Maine up and down the many peaks of the Appalachian Mountains. Bill Bryson and his unpredictable friend Stephen Katz were not well prepared for the challenging terrain, extreme weather, dangerous wild life and primitive conditions of the thickly forested wilderness. While many of their escapades were funny, their crazy decisions could also be annoying.

The author's research into and comments on the history of the trail, environmental issues, dangers from bears and the life style of many Americans, gave us an interesting background and plenty to discuss.

They showed great determination to cover 870 miles of the Appalachian Trail.

Future books:

September 14th North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell

November 9th Love After Love by Ingrid Persaud.

Anyone interested in joining us for either a one off or most of our discussions will be very welcome. For further details contact Pam Bridgewater at pamela.bridgewater@btinternet.com or on 01786 464 635.



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