

St Augustine's Dumbarton

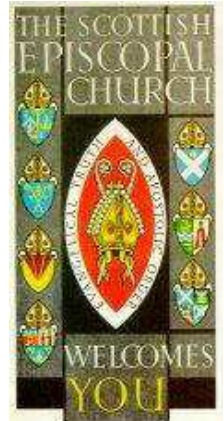


The New Look

Issue 45 June/July 2010

£1.00

Pastoral Care Conferences at St Augustine's



It was a pleasure to be involved in rolling out the Diocesan Pastoral Care Course in St Augustine's during May and June. The North West Regional Council took it on board and around 20 folk participated in the sessions held in St Augustine's.

The last session on July 3rd will include ministry to the bereaved amongst other things and it is not too late to sign up for this final session.

Those who want to retain their licenses as Pastoral Assistants, (Tim and Maggie in

our case), have to complete the course, but others have found the sessions interesting and informative and a real help to them in their daily life and interaction with others.

The course will be repeated in the autumn in the Diocesan Office on Wednesday afternoons if anyone else is interested.

Ministry belongs to us all, not just the priest or the pastoral assistants, and it's important that all of us are as equipped for ministry, and are given, if wanted, the appropriate skills, as we minister to each other.

Contents

From Kenny
Page 2

Rotas
Page 3

Circle
Page 4

St James the Less
Page 6

Photos
Pages 8 & 9

Smilelines
Page 10

Wait Till I Tell You
Page 12 - 14

Friends
Page 15

Parish Directory
Page 16

From Kenny....

You will probably have noticed the new sign which proclaims that our floating box at the rear of St Augustine's is our Community Hall. We can't really miss it because its been done in the brightest red paint that was available.



We say what we mean. It is a Community Hall. Various groups use it, from the Slimmers and the Karate Kids, the Alternative Drama Group, through to more serious stuff like AA, Narcotics Anonymous, The Richmond Fellowship, Brain Injury Groups, Carers Groups, and more, including Circle, which you can read about in another part of the magazine. Alternatives and others use it for Training Days or conferences, and it is proving to be a popular venue.

The danger we face is that we can, as a congregation, simply see those who use the hall as "User Groups" or even "Cash Cows" who will help to pay the bills. I have seen in so many congregations a similar sort of set-up, where what happens in church, and what happens in the hall have no relation to each other and are totally separate. There can exist an "Us and Them" situation, and it usually ends up in tears and recriminations about looking after "our" property or something similar.

Let's start with a positive vision of what we are trying to do. We are a town centre parish, situated in a place where there are a myriad of social and pastoral problems that need to be tackled, and we can't do it all on our own. We need to face up to the problems, because that is what Jesus commanded us to do, but we cannot do it all on our own.

So, the positive vision means working *in partnership* with professionals and volunteers who have the resources and the skills to tackle what needs to be done.

As a congregation we need to own what is happening in our Community Hall. We need to take an interest in what's being done, and even get involved where we can. We need to build bridges, foster friendships, offer our own gifts and skills where necessary, and make sure that everything that happens in the church and in the hall is part of the St Augustine's community and part of our life and mission.

That's how we need to see it - **The St Augustine's Community!** Friends- Users- Worshippers Together!

So many of our groups are involved in "ministry", and we need to connect with them and foster a partnership with them. Bridges need to be built, since we must avoid a situation where what happens in our hall has no bear-

ing on our congregational life and witness. These people are not "Hall Users", but are partners in ministry.

Can we take that concept on board?

First of all, it is important that we know what actually IS going on! To that end, I have invited, with Vernon's help, various community groups to set up displays in church about what they do and how they help the folk in Dumbarton. Some of these are hall users, others may not yet be. However, they are all potential partners in ministry. On an occasional Sunday I will allow users to take the sermon slot to explain what they do and why their service is needed.

In August, (August 7th), there is a big Community Barbecue which Friends' are organising, and all our user groups will join with us in setting out stalls, raising money, but raising, too, awareness of what we all have to offer our town, together, in so many different ways.

Hopefully this will be the first of many initiatives where we work together with agencies who use the Community Hall, and help us to realise that we are all in this together! Put this date in your diary now, because it is going to be an important day for the life of St Augustine's. We will be proclaiming to the town that we work in partnership with all these different groups and indeed care for our community.

We've done the buildings, we have set up the infrastructures, so now we need to get down to business! This is mission. This is outreach. This is service in the name of the Lord. This is Kingdom Stuff rather than Churchy Stuff! Are we ready to buy into *that* concept?

It is a situation I have worked for and dreamed about ever since I came to you as your priest in 2001. Now the real stuff begins. We tackle ministry and service, not alone, but in collaboration with others, knowing that the Holy Spirit is playing a big part in all of this.

It was heartening to have this affirmed by our new bishop when he came in early June. We will certainly have the help and the backing of the Diocese, and that's important for us to know. Inspired by Jesus himself, we enter into a new era. May God bless us in our undertaking!

Kenny

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Rotas for June/July 2010

Sunday June. 13th .

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Margaret Hardie & Morag O'Neill.

Intercessions: Margot Rhead.

Chalice: Tim Rhead & Maggie Wallace.

Sidespersons: Margaret Swan & L. Jenkinson

Sunday June. 20th

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Janette Barnes & Ghislaine Kennedy.

Intercessions: Tim Rhead.

Chalice: Barbara Barnes & Fran Walker.

Sidespersons: Margot Rhead & Ronnie Blaney

Sunday June 27th

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Maggie Wallace & Margot Rhead.

Intercessions: Evelyn O'Neill.

Chalice: Sharon Rowatt & Janette Barnes.

Sidespersons: Tim Rhead & Vernon Perrin.

Sunday July 4th .

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Fran Walker & Gavin Elder.

Intercessions: Margaret Hardie.

Chalice: Maggie Wallace & Tim Rhead..

Sidespersons: Jean Carr & David Ansell.

Sunday July 11th

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Barbara Barnes & Margaret Hardie

Intercessions: Linda Macaulay.

Chalice: Fran Walker & David Rowatt.

Sidespersons: C. Ashman & Roberta Mailley.

Sunday July 18th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: David Rowatt & Morag O'Neill.

Intercessions: Tim Rhead.

Chalice: Barbara Barnes & Sharon Rowatt.

Sidespersons: Linda Jenkinson & M. Swan.

Sunday July 25th

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Sharon Rowatt & Tim Rhead.

Intercessions: Fran Walker.

Chalice: Janette Barnes & Margaret Hardie.

Sidespersons: Margot Rhead & Roberta Mailley.

ROTAS OVER HOLIDAY PERIOD

If you have been put on a Rota while you are away from home, please try to arrange a "swap". It's quite tricky to fit in everyone's holidays!

Flower Rota:

June 12th. Maggie Wallace.

" 19th. Barbara Barnes & Betty Gordon

" 26th. Moira McGown & Dee Perrin..

July 3rd Maggie Wallace & Margaret Hardie.

" 10th Linda Macaulay and Moira McGown.

" 17th. Moira McGown.

" 24th. Barbara Barnes & Betty Gordon.

FLOWERS AT HOLIDAY TIMES

If anyone is unable to "do" the flowers when rota'd over the holiday period, please contact Moira McGown, who is very happy to take an extra turn.

SUNDAY ROTAS

READERS, INTERCESSORS SIDESPERSIONS.

There is always room for more volunteers for Rotas. If you would like to read lessons, lead intercessions or be a sidesperson on a Sunday, please speak to Kenny, Tim or Maggie. There isn't a test or an audition. Just be able to speak clearly, be yourself and smile!

Prayer Time

The church is open for a short midday prayer service, Monday to Friday at 12.30pm for 10 minutes. Please pop in if you are in the town centre at this time.



"It's not a mistake, you haven't heard our choir!"

CIRCLE COMES TO ST AUGUSTINE'S

Kenny has very kindly agreed to share his office with me, a Family Support worker from Circle. Circle is a charity that provides holistic, community based support to marginalised children and families. Formerly part of a national voluntary organisation Family Services Unit, they now work independently to improve opportunities for disadvantaged families. This includes a focus on children at risk of school exclusion and their families; children experiencing neglect, physical and emotional and/or sexual abuse; children and families affected by parental drug and alcohol use; fathers who are not engaging with helping service; and workforce development through mentoring and student training opportunities.

More specifically the Family Support worker based in Dumbarton will work with women being released from Greenock prison who have children under 16 and who themselves are affected by drug/alcohol issues.. I will do this by helping the women to prepare for their release and discussing their particular support needs.

Circle can provide the women with support to manage their life outside of prison, access other services; support to fill in forms, manage correspondence and support them in meetings with other professionals such as social workers and housing officers etc.

Circle can also offer support to help the women manage their children's behaviour, support to set routines and provide support to other members of their family who are involved with the children's lives e.g. grandparents. We can also be a listening ear for the women. For the children, Circle can; meet with the children and help them to talk about their worries; help the child to access groups/activities; support to improve children's school attendance and provide support for the mothers to attend their children's medical appointments

The Circle service in this area will provide support to women being released from prison who are returning to anywhere in Argyll, Bute, East or West Dunbartonshire. This service is a pilot funded initially for one year by the Criminal Justice Partnership. The same service is also being developed for women being released to Inverclyde, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire; this is currently funded for three years by the Robertson's Trust.

In 2007, the Robertson Trust funded Circle to conduct research into the women's prison population at HMP &YOI Cornton Vale. Previous research into female offenders has identified them as an excep-

tionally vulnerable group, characterised by substance misuse, poor physical and mental health, deprivation and victimisation. They commonly rely on prostitution and the drugs trade as a means of survival and require a tremendous range of support to overcome the numerous issues in their daily lives.

Circle identified a need for a more structured throughcare for this vulnerable group and began delivering this service in August 2008 for women being released from Cornton Vale to Edinburgh, West Lothian, North and South Lanarkshire. As a result of the success of the service offered in Cornton Vale it has now been extended to Greenock prison and the six local authority areas and criminal justice partnerships. I look forward to working with the St Augustine's community. **Janet Rae**

Church Walks

The next walk is on Saturday June 19th at 1.30 pm to Pappert hill, Bonhill. The July walk is on Saturday July 17th round the Greenock Cut, time to be arranged. More details from Tim or Rosemary

Christian Aid

thanks to all who helped or contributed during Christian Aid Week. The amounts raised will be in the next magazine

Home Prayer and Communion

This will be on Monday June 15th at 2pm at Shirley Currie's house. July date to be arranged

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A Sound Like a Blowing Violent Wind: Pentecost!

Early summer even in the thirties AD had been a time for holidays in the Mediterranean world, and since the Jewish temple festival Shavuot happened then, Jerusalem was a popular destination for travelers. So it was, that not only the disciples but also a great many strangers were in town, when suddenly this ‘Sound like the blowing of a violent wind’ could be heard.’

The apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and started to ‘speak in other tongues’.

With this, one of the signs had been fulfilled, of which the risen Lord had spoken, when he gave the apostles the task to go out and take the Good News to all the world: “They will speak in new tongues”.

These should not be tongues that cannot be understood, as they are practiced by mystic cults, but, as the foreign visitors to Jerusalem found out, they heard the apostles speak in their own languages.

What was new here, that this message was for everybody, it was like a reversal of the Babylonian confusion of languages. It was the fulfilment and final act of the work of Christ. It also confirmed that Jesus was the Son of God. Herein lay the beginning of the Christian Church, the first universal institution in the history of the world.

The event of the resurrection becomes the foundation stone of a mission, which goes beyond all known social experiences, the un-heard-of message of the equality of all human beings.

St Paul in his letter to the Corinthians explains (12.13) that the Holy Spirit does not, as previous religious beliefs did, create differences among the people of the earth, no Jews or Gentiles, no national nor class distinctions, but is for everybody.

The foundation of a movement which became historically relevant, because it destroyed the old order of values, must have been disturbing and not at all welcome. Those who thought the apostles were drunk were the majority. Something so radically new could not be introduced without a fight. Jesus himself said that he was to bring fire into the world.(Luke 12:49) The message of the risen Lord caused a disruption of the order of established religions and of the known political order.

This message could not have been based on any known philosophy nor on science. The German protestant theologian Rudolf Bultmann in his time caused much controversy with his lectures on Jesus.

He said: yes, a dead person can not rise again, we could – according to the teachings of the Enlightenment – call this a “Christian delusion”, had not at that time a ‘miracle’ occurred which was unexplained by the established society and philosophy.

This miracle was Jesus and his teaching. The French philosopher Blaise Pascal wrote (1620)“I hate all who don’t acknowledge that miracles happen.” He fought against established religious groups and against atheists of his time, asking what ever could persuade a godless free thinker to become a Christian. His answer seemed simple and paradox at the same time:” Without Jesus Christ we do not know the value of our life or death, nor do we know who we are or who God is. Pascal was a scientist. It is surprising that he concentrated on the weakest point of the Christian message, saying that without miracles we cannot understand the controversial new Logic which does not need scientific evidence for the existence of God nor a system of philosophy, which tells us the meaning of life. “We know that even when all scientific questions have been answered, the problems of our lives haven’t been touched.”

Neither science nor philosophy give us ultimate answers, nothing out of this world does. It has to come from outside.: At Pentecost God did just that by the giving of the Holy Spirit.. The Mode which would change the world was the idea of universal equality before and in Christ

.
B.Williams. based on an article by Cord Riechelmann, FAZ 31/5/2009.

Holidays:

Kenny is now going to be somewhat scarce during the month of June. Apart from General Synod, and a residential Clergy Conference, he and Linda depart to Kefalonia on June 20th. This will mean three Sundays where there will be visiting clergy, although Kenny will be back on July 4th.

During this time, Tim Rhead will be Layperson-in-Charge, and a priest can be contacted through him or Margaret Wallace, the other Pastoral Assistant. Services will be unaffected, although some will involve Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament.

St James the Least of All..

(We continue to publish our series of letters from Eustace, a wise old Rector to his nephew Darren, Curate in a much more modern, evangelical setting!)

The Rectory St. James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren,

Your decision to hold a Summer weekend Arts Festival in church, bringing culture to your inner city streets, was most commendable. Pity, how it all turned out.

The Friday evening started well with the concert of Scott Joplin piano music. Obviously knowing that the pieces were originally played in seedy bars on pianos wildly out of tune with several notes missing, your committee must have gone to endless trouble to find precisely the right instrument. Your stage hands, were, however, less careful and hadn't noticed that the platform had a noticeable list to port. After each piece, the pianist had to relocate the piano stool closer to his nomadic piano, with the last piece being performed with both entirely out of sight behind the pulpit.

It created much innocent entertainment for the audience, but the fault really should have been remedied before the Saturday evening choir concert. Discarded kneelers and rotting hymn books do not form a stable base for a stage supporting an 80-strong choir. So when it came to the enthusiastic rendering of hits from "Oklahoma", with copious hand movements, it came as something of a relief that the stage took this as the moment to signal defeat, tipping the tenors behind the altar. The audience's thunderous applause, assuming this was a carefully choreographed part of the performance, was quite touching. I am sure all the compensation claims will soon be sorted out.

Your one great mistake was to take on responsibility for organising the refreshments afterwards. Church entertainments committees have centuries of collective experience in judging the numbers of ham sandwiches and bottles of milk required. I am forever proud that our own ladies – through years of experience – can now get 34 cups of tea from every tea bag and can butter bread so thinly that one pack can last several months.

What you now do with 89 surplus loaves of bread is a problem you have brought upon yourself. You could possibly use them for supporting the stage next year.

As you discovered at your Sunday School Anniversary Service last week, special service sheets can be a mixed blessing. It was unfortunate that the front page welcomed your diocesan "Nishop" (although

perhaps a good thing you hadn't been welcoming a neighbouring "Vicar") and it was a shame that one of the hymns contained one verse fewer on the sheets than the book the organist was playing to, obliging your congregation to sing the last verse twice – although since in your tradition you seem to repeat choruses endlessly, probably no one noticed anyway. But the regrettable misprint which meant that ranks of primary school children sweetly lisped an obscenity really was too much.

Having said that, computer spell-checkers can cause their own problems. We once let our own system check a Christmas carol sheet and on the night found ourselves obliged to sing "away in a manger", mangers apparently being unknown to our machine.

If you use special sheets regularly, it seems a law of nature – as with metal coat hangers – that they all intermingle while no one is watching. Thus on Easter Day, half the congregation will have been issued with sheets for Harvest, which will only become obvious once the service begins. The first hymn will be entirely lost while sidesmen scuttle about looking for replacements only to find that there won't be enough of them anyway and then the second hymn will be lost while others helpfully wander about church donating their sheets to those looking helpless and then trying to find someone to share with.

Never, ever, print on them "Do not take home" as this will only ensure everyone does so. I have sometimes wondered if the instruction "Take this sheet home for reference" would ensure that they stayed neatly arranged in the pews after the service. And if it is a service where babies are likely to be present, be assured that many of the copies will be returned half chewed and coated with bits of whatever the infant had for breakfast. There must be a market for paper treated with a child-repellent flavour for such occasions.

Anyone who thinks we are an unimaginative nation should visit a church after a special service to see how many places members of congregations can invent to hide the booklets: under kneelers, neatly folded and hidden inside hymn books, among flower arrangements and behind heating pipes so that no one can quite reach them. They then lurk there reproachfully for the next ten years until mice resolve the problem.

No, stick to large, hard bound books. They are resistant to teeth and are too substantial to be hidden in pockets. Their only drawback is that they tend to fall victim to the pull of gravity at the quietest moments.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

The May Church Walk

Today is a glorious spring day ; the sun is shining and it is warm. There are nine of us on the church walk, plus four dogs of various shapes and sizes ; Archie, the huge golden retriever, Peanut, the rectory King Charles spaniel, Nina, the Jack Russell, and Kiera, the West Highland terrier. We meet in the car-park at Aberfoyle ; a busy place on a Saturday afternoon. Swallows and swifts are flying overhead as we set off. After a few steps, I see a sign pointing to the Poker tree ; which is an old oak, enclosed by railings. The notice informs us that a poker used to hang on the tree to commemorate the incident in Sir Walter Scott's novel, Rob Roy, when Baillie Nicol Jarvie defended himself with a hot poker, when he entered an inn in Aberfoyle, setting fire to his opponent's plaid.

We cross the Auld Brig over the river Forth and head south away from the town. On our right are some scattered council houses, and on our left, we pass a field where the grass is churned up ; yes it contains pigs, not the usual fat pink porkers but smaller brown coloured hogs. Next we come to the church-yard, in which lie the ruins of the old church. I go in to look for the grave of the Revd Robert Kirk, the so called Faery minister, who disappeared on Doon Hill on May 14th 1692. He was the minister of Aberfoyle, a Gaelic scholar, who published in 1691 a book called " the Secret Commonwealth of Elves and Faeries ". He used to climb Doon Hill every day, but one day he never returned, and the belief was that he was abducted by the faeries for revealing their secrets. Doon Hill is our destination today and we have been careful to make sure that our minister is not with us, though we do have his wife, Linda. I find a metal casket at the entrance to the old church, but is it empty ? No-one knows.

We lean on the stone wall and admire the view towards the range of wooded hills to the north of Aberfoyle, the most prominent is called Craigmore. The road to the Trossachs goes over the Duke's pass, off which lies the David Marshall Lodge, perched on the hillside overlooking the village. This a centre for outdoor pursuits and for explaining the wildlife of the area. We pass the old manse and the kennels for some husky dogs. We now leave the last of the houses and the dogs can be let off their leads. Archie soon spots a puddle in the road and rushes into it and lies down, emerging with his lower parts black with mud. This happens on every walk ! Vernon spots some purple violets at the side of the track, then as we enter a wood, I notice a small brown bird with a red tail ; it is only a glimpse but it must be a female redstart, a summer visitor to old woods.

The track climbs to a sign-post pointing to the Faery Knowe as Doon Hill is often known. This is a narrow path, which winds upwards through beautiful woodland, mostly oaks which have just come into leaf. The air is pleasantly cool here in the shade of the trees. We see a strange rock, which is inlaid with round stones. Rosemary says this is puddingstone and is a relic of the ice age. There is not much bird-song in the afternoon, but we do hear a song thrush and blue and great tits. The path is steep and we have to take care on loose stones. However, the hill is not high, about 300 feet and we soon reach a level area at the top. Here there is a single large Scots pine, which is re-

garded as the access point to the world of the faeries. Pieces of material, objects such as a teddy and a toy car, and messages have been attached to the branches of the pine and other trees. One message is very poignant " I wish that my dad will be better soon ", but another is less serious " I wish you'd eat all my lunch "

We sit on fallen logs and enjoy a drink and a snack. Although Aberfoyle is so busy today, we seem to be the only people on Doon Hill. It is in various ways a magical place ; the fresh green of the trees, the dark green of the ancient pine, the blue sky, and the sun shining through the branches. I wonder what it was like in 1692 when the Revd Robert Kirk paid his last visit almost at the same time of year. Andrew Lang wrote a short poem called " the Faery Minister " He heard, he saw, he knew too well, the secrets of your fairy clan; you stole him from the haunted dell, who never more was seen of man, now far from heaven, and safe from hell, unknown of earth, he wanders free. Would that he might return and tell of his mysterious company ! And half I envy him who now, clothed in her court's enchanted green, by moonlit loch or mountain's brow is chaplain to the Fairy Queen."

We find a slightly easier path down the hill and rejoin the main track. The woods are full of the white flowers of stitchwort, also known as star of Bethlehem, as well as bluebells. This is an official cycle route and occasionally cyclists pass by. We come to a bridge over a burn and Linda encourages Archie to take a dip. He loves water and soon submerges, except for his head, and emerges in his normal golden colour without the mud. Nina and Peanut also have a soak, but Kiera prefers to keep her feet dry. We turn left at a cross-roads, where one track has a notice," Husky Trail ". We cross an open area which is very warm in the afternoon sun, and come to a timber foot-bridge over the river Forth. It is amazing to think that this river flows east all the way to the North Sea. We see a line of trees, which are only just beginning to come into leaf ; they are aspens, which are one of the last trees to turn.

We reach the old Aberfoyle railway line, which is now a foot-path and cycle track, and turn left. A cuckoo is calling from a distant tree ; it is one of the iconic sounds of spring. Rosemary spots some bugle, a short erect deep blue flower. We head for Aberfoyle, passing quite a few walkers and cyclists ; one man speaks to the dogs in Gaelic. Vernon has a chat with him and discovers that he comes from Wester Ross and is doing estate work around Aberfoyle. The river is on our left and the main road not far away on the right. The hill-side opposite is covered in bluebells and the bright yellow flowers of the gorse are all around ; it is a very colourful time of year.

The long straight path is tiring so some of us sit on a seat for a few minutes for a rest, looking across the river to Doon Hill. Butterflies flutter past, tortoise-shells and an orange-tip. A black-cap sings from some trees ; a very melodic song. We continue on our way, passing a line of four former railway cottages with attractive gardens, and soon we are back in Aberfoyle. We buy ice-cream cones and watch the passing scene. An elderly biker gets off his motor-bike and removes his helmet and leather jacket ; it must be awful hot wearing that gear. A lady walks past with three huskies and a pied wagtail flits about looking for insects. Aberfoyle is a great place for walks and we would like to come back another time.



Photos this month include images from the Parish Walk, the Sparkle Night, Baby Amy's Baptism, and of course the Murder Mystery Night including a bishop who was a mysterious passenger!





Smile-Lines

Volcano

A recent letter that appeared in The Independent newspaper: "Following the recent interruption to air travel, I find myself out of pocket, due to what I am informed is an "act of God." To avoid future financial embarrassment, please could you recommend an atheist insurance company?"

Inner Peace

If you can start the day without caffeine,
If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,
If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,
If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,
If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time,
If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,
If you can conquer tension without medical help,
If you can relax without liquor,
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,
.....then you are probably the family dog.

Scared?

As a sergeant in a parachute regiment, I took part in several night-time exercises. Once, I was seated next to a lieutenant fresh from jump school. He was quiet and looked a bit pale, so I struck up a conversation. "Scared, lieutenant?" I asked. He replied, "No, just a bit apprehensive." I asked, "What's the difference?" He replied, "That means I'm scared, but with a university education."

Untimely answered prayer

During the minister's prayer one Sunday, there was a loud whistle from one of the back pews. Tommy's mother was horrified. She pinched him into silence and, after church, asked, "Tommy, whatever made you do such a thing?" Tommy answered soberly, "I've been asking God to teach me to whistle, and suddenly, he did!"

Prayer equality

When my daughter, Kelli, said her bedtime prayers, she would bless every family member, every friend, and every animal (current and past). For several weeks, after we had finished the nightly prayer, Kelli would say, "And all girls." This soon became part of her nightly routine, to include this closing. My curiosity got the best of me and I asked her, "Kelli, why do you always add the part about all girls?" She replied, "Because everybody always finish their prayers by saying 'All Men.'"

Say a prayer

Young James and his family sat down to Sunday dinner at his grandmother's house. When James received his plate, he started eating right away. "James! Please wait until we say our prayer," said his mother. "I don't need to," the boy replied. "Of course, you do," his mother insisted. "We always pray before eating at home." "That's at our house," James protested. "This is grandma's house, and she can cook!"

Out of the mouths of babes....

A woman invited some people from church to dinner. At the table, she turned to her six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you've heard Mummy say before," the hostess answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

You know you are living in 2010 when....

1. You accidentally enter your password on the microwave ...
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you...
5. You e-mail your children upstairs to tell them dinner is ready.
6. Your reason for not staying in touch with various friends and family is that they are not on Facebook.
7. You pull up in your own driveway and use your mobile to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the shopping.
8. Every TV advert has a web site at the bottom of the screen.
9. Leaving the house without your mobile, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
10. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.

**

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Beneath our Feet

(from Fran)

Our church hall was designed to look as though it is floating. Did you know that before our new hall was built we had to have archaeologists on site to check out whether there was anything old and interesting beneath it? Fortunately nothing really significant, otherwise we probably would have had to delay the building programme.

What they did find: the foundations of at least three post-medieval buildings*, two deposits of garden soil, the lowest of which contained a sherd of 15th century green glaze pottery.

Why is the site important? Well, it seems that St Augustine's lies within the historic 'mediaeval core' of Dumbarton, which was established as a burgh in 1222 by Alexander II. The town extended along the High Street from the old parish church to the bridge, with houses fronting onto the street and land behind.

The land chosen for the burgh is thought to have been a 'greenfield' site. New settlers were given five years to build and occupy a house on their plot of land, during which time they didn't have to pay any rates. However this new town proved to be less popular than other burghs being established at the time, maybe because it was on the edge of Alexander's kingdom and on the boundary between the highlands and lowlands [and maybe because it rained more here!].

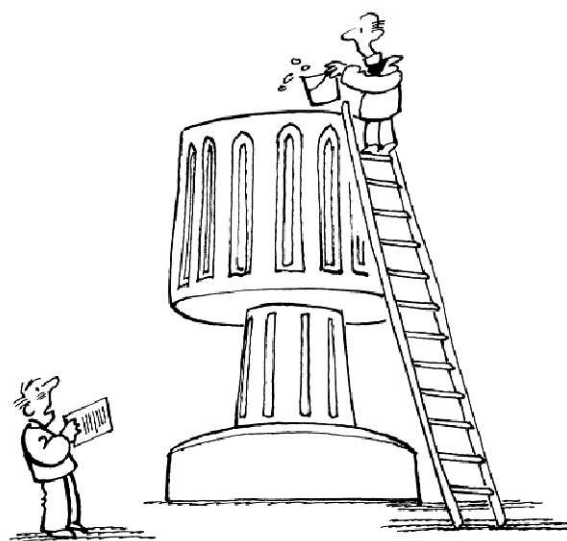
The castle and the soldiers posted there provided employment, yet during sieges the town must have been filled with 'enemy' troops. I wonder whether such events would have interrupted the weekly markets and annual fairs. Goods produced from an area extending from Glasgow to Loch Fyne could only be bought and sold at the market place in Dumbarton whilst the burgh held a monopoly over river-borne trade between Loch Long and the Kelvin.

By the time our green pottery was broken and thrown into the back garden, there was a parish church at Riverside and the collegiate church of St Mary (with hospital) (hence St Mary's Way) had been built where the central station is now. The language in church would have been Latin. The

market place was at the junction of High Street and Cross Vennel (now College Street) with the market cross, tollbooth and tron close by.

The garden itself was part of the burgage plot/toft/rig/tenement, a strip of land, about 6.5m wide and stretching back about 70m, on which the owner would build a house fronting on to the main trading area of Dumbarton, the High Street. The dark, loamy 'garden soil' could have been the product of centuries of manuring, or large deposits of midden which have subsequently decomposed. Further up the street the remnants of mediaeval smithing workshops and cesspits (one of which contained a fig seed) have been found in similar plots. Other evidence of the diet of those times include barley and oat grains and the bones of various animals. Cattle and sheep, brought for sale from the surrounding area, and locally grown pigs were butchered, mostly using cleavers whilst saws were used to provide gigot chops. Locally reared chickens were also available. Remains of horses have also been found and, surprise, surprise, rats were also around in the mediaeval Dumbarton. What's changed?

**ie breeze blocks that supported the old ex-Gartcosh hall, concrete and red bricks from the previous church hall and sandstone blocks from a large building, possibly part of the Burgh school that occupied the site before the church was built.*



...er, Vicar, when I said 'It would help in our church publicity if we used a larger font..'

'Wait Till I Tell You.....'

Janette looks back on the 'merry merry month of May' and looks forward to 'the leafy month of June'.

'WE FROLIC WHILE 'TIS MAY'

It was the time of the year for poetry and so, with Spring in the air, we washed our faces in the May dew- cheaper than Botox - and indulged in some pure escapism, fantasy and even madness. First we arranged an expedition to Neverland, home of Peter Pan.

We, the ladies who lunch, took Rachel and Jackie to the King's Theatre to enjoy a '*daud*' of culture. Most amusing moment was when TBag sat down beside 4year old Jackie and whispered excitedly '*Jackie, are you going to tell me what happens in Peter Pan?*' Jackie took her eyes off the stage for just a fleeting moment and answered '*Just watch it and see!*' So TBag shut up and we all marvelled at the wonderful effects, feeling proud that we knew not only the Technical Director but the actor who played the role of Michael.

Then we hurried home to the telly in time to fly 'Over the Rainbow', voting for the Dorothys and Totos with much more enthusiasm than we had voted at the recent election. We sparkled at the Friends' Night on the 7th and felt like princesses trying on all the jewellery before purchasing just a few items to enhance our holiday wardrobes.

Our final May frolic was a Mad Hatter's Tea Party in Cardross to celebrate a 50th Birthday. So, daft hats were procured but no one could compete with Frankie resplendent in a lampshade and nightie! Whit a wumman!

NEW BISHOP IS MURDER SUSPECT.

And a team calling themselves 'the Winners' actually thought Gregor our new bishop had done the dirty deed! They went home with a bag of lollipops! Confused? Well - there was a lady in the audience who thought Gregor was one of the actors, possibly on account of his almost thespian hairstyle and Bishop's gear. Surely Bishops don't dress like Bishops all the time? They don't go down to the 'midden' wearing magenta and sporting a jewelled cross - or do they?

Oh yes, there was a Bishop in the plot but that part

was played by Tim in a trendy shirt. Gregor was playing a 'confused passenger'. More confused? Well, don't worry - this was a Friends' Murder Mystery on a lovely June evening and the hall was packed to capacity. The mystery was solved by a team erroneously called 'Huvnae Goat a Clue' and made up of Gillian, Ricky, Sandra McMartin, Fraser and Faye.

They not only identified TBag O'Neill as the wicked murderess, Candice Stress, but they correctly stated the motive and method of execution. Well done! This team of super sleuths also threw in a little bigotry to spice up the plot - *Sophie Deed was done in by a pure raging jealous Celtic supporter who was cheating with her husband*'. Just because Sophie had a Ranger's tattoo on her right thigh! This was a team who had listened to every word of 'Chocolate with Everything' and were worthy winners. Congratulations.

The setting for the evening was the dining room of a luxury cruise ship. This gave everyone the chance to dress for dinner, sip lots of bubbly and scoff canapés topped with caviar. What do you mean you thought it was mouse droppings? Our new hall has never been so busy and the recent fashion statement made by BAFTA attendees paled into insignificance beside our trendy Friends in their trendy frocks. The Charity Shops must have had their busiest week for years!

There were some moving performances - not that one could move very far with the closeness of the beautifully decorated tables. Most impressive was Sophie Deed - a dummy from the DPT wardrobe department who had been murdered and stuck under the chocolate buffet table until teenage terror, Wayne Pesterall, uncovered her with a dramatic scream. She was ceremoniously carried out by three attractive young sailors, Rachel, Jamie Lee and Chloe who were completely unfazed by the victim's blood and the large knife protruding from her bosom.

Then Captain Carnaptious (guess who?) urged the participants to assist in unveiling the perpetrator of the evil deed - after they had finished their first course.

Wayne, better known as Keir Mailley, was dragged back to his Mammy - the wicked Candice and his stepfather Sam Stress - a successful businessman knowledgeably portrayed by Charlie.

Also at the Captain's Table was Kenny as the Rt. Hon Al Claimitt- an MP on a fact finding mission and Maggie as Minnie Leaks, a gossiping church going spinster of the parish who held a grudge against the victim for dodging the Tea Rota. Tim, as Bishop Benji in the story, was on honeymoon with his new wife Beyonce a glamorous ex-WAG who couldn't find her way around the ship. Linda so perfected the role of airhead that she spent half an hour at the end of the evening trying to locate her car keys!

Then there was the Ship's Entertainments Officer, Kyrie L Easson played by Fran and a disreputable Head Waitress in leggings called Winnie Drappit played by Roberta. Favourites amongst the audience were the McSwallys - Cissie and Wullie who had won their cruise in a competition in the Sun. Ghislaine and Gavin enjoyed every minute of their performances and kept the audience in stitches.

Aye, we're very lucky down at St. Augs - we've got more actors than Eucharistic Assistants!

The 3-course luxury buffet had folks asking for the name of our caterer. Starting with the melon the food just got better and better. Those who got tore into their melon before Bishop Benji completed his Latin grace missed out on the crème de menthe accompaniment.

Meanwhile, back in the buffet room a feast of delights awaited - Turkey, Chicken, Nut Roast, Baked Ham, Fresh Salmon and Prawns all served with a delicious array of salads and buttered new potatoes. The real chefs were Margaret H, Fran, Linda, Roberta. Margot and Maggie complete with fish kettle.

After seeing the vessel, TBag now knows that the salmon is not stuffed into the same type of kettle that makes her endless cups of tea! The buffet was served efficiently by a crew from the Exec, mainly in smart sailor suits. Second helpings were enjoyed by most but the chocoholics were already eying up the Chocolate Buffet. A large chocolate cake with 'who dunnit' in icing reminded everyone that the mystery had still to be solved. Derek, our wine waiter, kept the glasses topped up and soon had a fan club of ladies from the bus pass brigade.

In between courses there was time for socializing and Gregor managed to visit all the tables and chat to our Friends from other Churches in the town who support our events so well. Some of the ladies are still talking about meeting the Bishop and hope that they'll be seeing him again at some future Friends' events. Oh, and he played the 'confused passenger' perfectly - a performance worthy indeed of Kenneth Branagh!

We all disembarked happily from the 'Enigma of the Seas', relieved at last to remove tight white trousers and uncomfortable shoes. But next morning the crew who had worked so hard were back on board clearing up the mess and making sure that the hall was in ship shape condition for our growing number of users.

'IT'S ONLY WORDS'

I enjoy listening to the Radio early in the morning when interviewers are most likely to make mistakes. One cracker from Radio Scotland '*After the news we have our Health Minister, Nicola Sturgeon on preventing front line services.....sorry, that should be preserving front line services*'. Are you sure about that?

And the demise of the Duchess of York resulted in her financial situation being described as '*under stress*'. What's up with '*skint*' or '*broke*'?

GREEN SHOOTS IN THE HIGH STREET?

During May the local press alerted us to a scam at the RBS ATM in the High Street. An illegally installed scanner was reading details of **your** debt! However, it has been reported that the 'Save Dumbarton High Street' campaigners are relieved to hear that at last someone is doing business in this dilapidated thoroughfare.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE TARTAN TORRIES?

The man with the most difficult job in Scotland is surely Lord Sanderson of Bowden who has been commissioned to find out why we are not voting Tory. So, if a seventy seven year old aristocrat with a '*bool in his mooth*,' and clutching a clipboard approaches you in the High Street, don't laugh or show him the bus stop for Dalmoak - the '*poor sowl's*' only doing his job!

Over/

END OF TERM MEMORIES.

The last Friday in June will always bring back happy memories - long school holidays looming and the start of the Dumbarton Fair. But who can forget the Dumbarton Academy Prize Giving Ceremonies in the now derelict Burgh Hall with the platform party of local dignitaries and the school choir poised for their annual rendition of the school song?

I was not a member of the school choir which was a good thing both for the listeners and for allowing me more time to sit at the back and do endless parodies of the words. Who still remembers them? It started-

'Old School that bred us , Old Town that bore us'
and trundled on to the final verse which was to me really scary -

*And when we come to the journey's ending
And settle ourselves in the Inn of God,
May we have news that is worth the sending
Of deeds we've done and of ways we've trod.*

Help! Some of us were only twelve and hoping that the Inn of God was a long way into the future! And the image of God as an innkeeper sorting out the righteous and those who could boast of successful lives was not one that I accepted. Never mind - I quickly recovered at the thought of the long holidays when the sun was always shining and the tar melting on the streets.

THERE MAY BE TROUBLE AHEAD...

We eagerly await our new PM's programme of cuts which will change our way of life and result in untold national despondency. *'Oh yes,'* says the PM *'we have a £770 billion national debt left behind by Gordon Brown and the recession. And furthermore we came last in this year's Eurovision Song Contest. But don't worry, Nick and I are going to make you proud to be British again. We are all going to be in this together and we are all going to share the common misery.'* Aye, and I'm going to be coming up the Clyde on a bike.....

LOOKING FORWARD TO.....

Wimbledon - will it be Murray magic or Murray misery? All fingers and toes crossed, please. And.....have a good summer!

Janette

MAD - Music- Arts- Drama at St Augustine's!

Kyiv Classic Accordion Duo

Oleksiy Kolomoiets and Igor Sayenko

as part of their UK Churches Charity Tour

present a concert of

Easy Listening Classical and Russian Music

Sunday 25th JULY
7.30pm

retiring collection
in aid of Chernobyl mothers and
children

Richmond Architects

Architects for the Restoration
and the New Hall

Supporting
The Friends of St. Augustine's



Scottish Charity
No: **SC040459**

Friends in June

Soon your annual
membership re-
newal letters will
be coming

through your letterbox or more likely be sitting waiting for you at the back of the church. Hopefully, you will immediately pop your cheque into an envelope and send or give it to Margaret Hardie, our Membership Coordinator.

Maybe you will think 'Why should I bother this year! I could spend the £15, £25 or £50 on something else.....what do I get for my cash?' The answer is that first and foremost you are helping St. Aug's to continue to be a force within the community of Dumbarton by ensuring that we have the funds to keep going into the future with a well used community hall, a full time Rector, and a place of prayer and quiet meditation each day for everyone who wants or needs it.

On a personal level you continue to get a discount on every event, a free magazine (posted to you if you live outside the area) and this year we are re-introducing the monthly free draw. Yes! The draw is back and each month there will be 2 prizes of M&S vouchers. It will be drawn at the monthly event and be sure that if your number comes up you will receive your vouchers within days, either by hand or through the post. So, decide now! Rejoin the Friends of St. Aug's or join for the first time.

Having come back from our cruise aboard the Murder Mystery Ship of Dreams we are having a month of rest and recuperation during July, so that the Friend Exec can be refreshed and ready to go in August.

On the 7th August we are holding St. Aug's Community Fair in the hall and weather permitting, in the car park and around the church. This will take place between 11am and 4pm and there will be a barbecue and lots of stalls, with tombola, raffles and other special events going on throughout the day. We are hoping that our hall user groups will have their own stalls.

This is also the opening of our Coffee Morning after the July break and we will be making some changes to try to encourage more of the local community to come along for their morning coffee and a chat with their friends on a Saturday morning. Help us to make this a success by coming along....to sell, to buy, to eat, to chat, and to be a part of the Community Fair. Bring lots of friends and if you would like to take a stall please speak to me, Morag or any of the Friends Exec who will be glad to take your name and details.

I hope you have a good summer and look forward to seeing you at the Fair and/or lots of the Friends events during the next year.

A Letter to Friends:

Dear Friends of St. Aug's,

I must congratulate you all on the wonderful evening you gave on the 2nd June. Everything was wonderful. It gives everyone a chance to dress up to whatever they want, including Ghislaine with her striped socks and baseball boots with her evening wear. Only Ghislaine can get away with that! And all the little sailors, their uniforms were lovely, and of course, the wine waiter, mmm!

The food was perfection and of course the ones who cooked the food and worked so hard, it was all beautifully presented. It is a great gift St. Aug's has, and surely the great hand of God was in there somewhere, as it's all due to him in everything we do.

Thank you! to everyone who organized a great night.

Sincerely, M Ferguson.

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Email: staugustinessec@btinternet.com

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54 Helenslee Cres

Dumbarton G82 4HS (frkenny@btinternet.com)

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Tel :- 01389 732341

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Lay Representative: Tim Rhead (trhead@hotmail.com) (01389 761676)

Alternate Lay Representative: Maggie Wallace (maggiwallace@blueyonder.co.uk)

Fabric Convener: Margaret Hardie and her Team

Project Development: Fran Walker (fran_walker@hotmail.com) Tel:- 01389 761403

Trustees: The Rector, Margaret Wallace (01389 757200), Barbara Barnes

Other Vestry Members: Barbara Barnes (barbarabarnes78@yahoo.co.uk) (01389 755984), Margaret Hardie (mghardie@blueyonder.co.uk) (01389 767983), Janette Barnes (01389 761398), (Janette.Barnes@btinternet.com), , Roberta Mailley (01389 731863), Anne Dyer, Linda Jenkinson (01389 761693), Gavin Elder, Margaret Swan, Rosemary McLeay, Shadrach Shame.

Regional Council Representative: Roberta Mailley (01389 731863)

A Fond Farewell to Toastie Dog!

It was with great sadness that Toastie had to be put down shortly after his seventh birthday. The wee man was suffering from congenital heart failure and his lungs were just filling up with fluid. We did all we could to help him but the end was inevitable.

If ever there was a Parish Dog, it was Toastie! He was around most of Kenny's ministry here and enjoyed the fuss of the "matrons" and others alike, Parish Walks, inspecting gravesides, and riding side-saddle in the Rectory Car.

Always just a little aloof, he was definitely Mansewood rather than Bellsmyre, he will be greatly missed by many, and leaves a gaping hole in Rectory life. You were the best, wee man!!

