



St Augustine's Dumbarton

Issue 55 November 2011



the new look

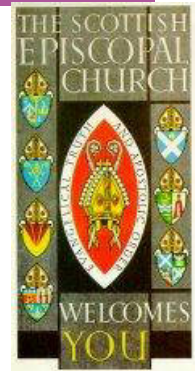
40 Years on - Still Going Strong!



John and Margaret Hardie celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday 30th October, with a Service of Thanksgiving in St Augustine's. They were married here by Revd Archie McPherson, and their family life have centred around St Aug's all during these years.

It was a difficult service to compile, with John refusing to have anything "too soppy", but we managed it in the end, surrounded by family and friends.

There was much to be grateful for, and all at *New Look* pass on their congratulations.



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Annual Report of the Rector

General:

It was only two days ago that I celebrated my 10th Anniversary as your priest here in St Augustine's Dumbarton, and that has been the cause of much reflection on my part. I certainly have never served anywhere quite as long as this in the past, so some things have obviously gone right, and I haven't been hounded out the town – yet! I've been reflecting on the number of so many good people that we have lost to death, folk who were in with the bricks and were the backbone of this congregation when I arrived here. God, in his mercy, has replaced them all, and even added to our number, so I look back in gratitude for all they gave and have handed on to us today.

We are in the enviable situation of having remarkable and busy buildings. The Quinquennial Report from the Diocesan Architect gave us an almost 5 star report, but little jobs around the fabric of the building will always need doing. The parish is without doubt one of the busiest in the Diocese, with something always going on, either in the church or in the halls, and we are building up quite a reputation as a church which really cares about our town and the problems that this community face on a daily basis. We can't stand still, though, and rest on our laurels, for there is still much work to be done.

After many years of "hard-hat" ministry, where building work and restoration was at the forefront of our very being, the last year has seen us build up many different sorts of ministries, both in the church and the hall, and a fair number of new faces have appeared amongst our number as a result. May that long continue to be the case. However, it's this "gentler" ministry that I have sometimes found it hard to settle into. I seem to have always been involved in building things, or restoring things, and there's nothing left to build or restore..... except our spiritual life and our life as a community! Now, that's the harder part! I only hope and pray that I am up to the task.

Community Hall:

It has been wonderful to see our Community Hall ministry just growing and developing in the way we had all hoped it would. There are a few groups which use the premises who pay top rates because they are commercial enterprises, but it is the number of groups, organisations, and individuals who care for the folks on the margins that seem to dominate our "lets", and that's the way I wanted it to be. Our reputation as a church that cares is growing quite rapidly, and I'm rather proud of that! I'm proud that we have NA, and AA, proud that we house Dumbarton Carers and the Richmond Fellowship, proud that we host groups that support people in recovery and people that are vulnerable, and proud that we share the building with Circle (Scotland), and play a small part in

Janet Rae's remit. I've missed some out, but they know who they are and what they do, from Amnesty, Community Councils, The Lennox Trust etc etc. We are here, primarily to serve others.

What I'm equally proud of is the way that the congregation has rallied to keep the place clean and tidy, and taken responsibility for opening up and locking up after meetings at all times of the day and night.

An exciting development is the advent of a "Girl's Group", for teenagers, which Anne Dyer is in the process of setting up. I believe that this will be a big part of our mission, and a vital cog in the life of the congregation.

Numbers:

I think it was St Luke that started us all off with the obsession of numbers, but whoever was initially responsible, the Synod Clerk calls for Parish Returns in Advent of each year. Final numbers on my return are obviously not available as it's not December yet, but I'll be reporting a rise in the number of Communicants and those on the Parish Roll. Communion made on a Sunday, of late have been just a tad better than the last 12 months, and I'll report 8 Confirmations, 8 Baptisms, (5 adult), 6 burials, and 2 marriages. The fly in my ointment is that our Easter Communion went down from 99 last year to 80 this year. Maybe there were more on holiday 2011? However, this is part of a wider tendency. We have lots of folk, and lots who come regularly, but we need more to make a special commitment to come *every* Sunday. Then we can start putting out extra seats! If we all came at once on the one Sunday, there would be standing room only.

We are trying to work on our welcome, at the moment, and that's something we'll be revisiting in the next year as part of our Mission Action Plan.

Giving:

No doubt the Treasurer will have lots to say about this, but although our Sunday numbers are up, the amount we give on a Sunday morning is down. If you pay tax at all to the Inland Revenue, can I beg you to sign a Gift Aid form? It means we get 30% more on every penny you give us, at no inconvenience to yourself. If you link that, too, with taking envelopes, so that your collection gets put away even on Sundays that you are not here, then the increase to our income will be surprisingly significant. Direct giving needs to increase, even in this time of austerity, maybe even because of this time of austerity. The church's energy bill has increased at the same amount as yours.

Pastoral Care:

Tim Rhead continues to be an incredible help in looking after the pastoral needs of the congregation and I don't

know what I'd do without him. However, we continue to care for each other in an exceptional way, and we are indeed a "caring community". Our care reaches far beyond the members of the congregation, and I know that so many of you do so much for others in the community.

I do as much as I can, but much of my ministry is about responding to emergencies and crisis as they pop up on a weekly basis. Because of Diocesan commitments which I seem to have inherited because I'm getting long-in-the-tooth, or more experienced, have been taking up much of my time, and as the Diocese rolls out its Strategy for Mission, these commitments may increase.

On the bright side, all being well, we are hoping to have a Curate in September of next year on a non-stipendiary basis, and although she'll be coming to be trained, her input will be much welcomed.

Study Groups and Prayer Group:

Tim, Vernon and Rosemary keep a little House Communion and Prayer Group going in Shirley Currie's house on a monthly basis, and I feel that some more of us could support this. Meanwhile, this Lent we looked a delightful little book, asking us to explore God in the ordinary. It was very down-to-earth and hugely successful.

Friends and MAD:

I run out of superlatives when I begin to talk about the work and effort and creativity that this group of incredible people bring to the life of St Augustine's. The Wizard of Aug's was my highlight of the year, and the Bishop enjoyed it immensely. Month by month we seem to churn out social events for everyone, and new members sign up because they enjoy the fun! It's a tremendous vehicle for our mission and outreach. We have been in great need of the funds they raise during the past year, and I'm grateful, too, for that side of things. We've had Lenny & Myra of course, the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, the Sexagesima Soiree, and much much more.

Sadly, The Ukranian Accordionists probably made their final visit to St Augustine's this year, and we'll be sorry to break the annual concert arrangement which we all enjoyed. However, the Quilting Exhibition went as well as ever, and they will certainly return next year.

To launch the "Pride in our Town" week, we hosted an extremely successful Craft Fair in the church, and this may well become a regular event.

Community Fair:

The weather was not so kind to us this year which was an incredible pity. Gavin and his team put in so much effort with fire engines, a children's area with a bouncy castle, and so much more, including a magnificent Prize Draw,

but when it pours, it pours! The great thing, though, is not so much the £1200 we raised, but the way that the hall groups became involved again. We need so many more things, like last year's Christmas Party, that we can do together, so that the wider "Family of St Augustine's" can grow more closely together.

Friday Lunches/ Saturday Coffee:

The faithful band of people who sustain these fundraising events are to be commended for their continued commitment, not only for raising money to keep us afloat, but for keeping our profile high in the Town Centre, and using these fundraisers as a vehicle for our mission and outreach. Rosemary McLeay retired from Fridays this year, and she'll be greatly missed!

Ecumenism:

It's sad to report that the Minister's Fraternal seems to have died a death at the moment in Dumbarton, but great to see the flourishing of Dumbarton Churches Together. Again we collected for Christian Aid together, had the Good Friday Walk of Witness together, came together for the Spring Festival, participated together in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and shared some Holy Week services together. Our special Maundy Thursday Ceremonies were well attended again, and sometimes we just manage to feed everyone by the skin of our teeth.

Sunday School:

Those who give of their time to take Sunday School are to be highly commended and admired. Sometimes the age range goes from 1-15, and there seems a need to change the structures we have in place. However, this is very difficult to do when children are not coming on a regular basis. That's often beyond the control of parents and grandparents and we appreciate the difficulties. All our teachers do a superb job, but Margot Rhead's lessons seem to always produce a spectacular splash of colour to the Notice Boards at the back! Well done to you all!

Fabric:

As mentioned earlier, our Quinquennial Report was most favourable, but there's lots of work that needs done on a regular basis to prevent water ingress to the church. Gutters have needed replacing, and some of the good folk from Alternatives have given the hall a good lick of paint. We seem, too, to have a leak in the central heating system, and, inevitably, things just break down. We're trying to keep our heads above water and being as frugal as possible.

Parish Website:

It's important that this is kept up-to-date, and my thanks go to Morag who keeps the events page as current as possible.

You can download past magazines from the website, along with other goodies!

Music:

The Music Group goes from strength to strength, and we seem to be forever lending out our talent to other parishes for one-off services. There is always new stuff to learn, but we try to do so without forgetting the treasure in the old stuff too. Any complaints to me, please, rather than individuals!

Youth:

We sent Jamie-Lee to this year's big Piskie Youth Week at Glenalmond and she enjoyed every minute! The youngsters are always being encouraged to join in with the music, and Anne Dyer's Group should be starting on Tuesday nights in the hall very soon.

Miscellaneous:

It's been a strange year in the Rectory with Linda's retirement. Working habits for me have had to be changed, but the dogs are loving the longer walks and the extra attention. I'll get used to it eventually.

For the second year, Linda and I had a proper holiday, as I was beginning to see my trips to The Gambia as being more work-related than holiday time, and it's done us good to be anonymous in a hot place with a laid back atmosphere.

One of the highlights of the year was yet another of Ricky and Ghislaine's concerts in the Denny Theatre. Apart from raising a lot of cash, the Allsorts Choir was formed! This group of incredible singers come from about 10 different parishes in Dumbarton, and it was Ghislaine who brought them all together. As they become famous, (infamous?), it's good to remember that it all started at St Augustine's and indeed they still practice here! When they become millionaires perhaps they will remember their roots!

Thanks

I wrote last year: "There are so many people to thank that I would surely miss people out if I began to single out individuals. Suffice to say that I am often quoted as saying that I am Rector of the best wee parish in the West of Scotland. It is folk like you who make it so. However, I need to say a special "Thank You" to both our Trustees, Barbara Barnes and Margaret Wallace, for their tremendous support and hard graft, and a "Thank You" to Tim Rhead for his work as a "Pastoral Assistant" through the last year. A big "Thank You", too, to Georgie Duncan who keeps the Sacristy going, and whose work is, on the most part, unseen. Without those four we would all be sunk!" I simply repeat what is already on record!

The Last Bit

The Diocesan Mission Strategy is now well and truly launched, although we have in reality been involved in that strategy for over two years now since the hall was built. Every parish will need a Mission Action Plan and will be designated a facilitator who will oversee our progress. I'm happy to say that Anne Tomlinson will continue to come to support, inspire and guide us through the whole process as our facilitator. A lot of work is being done behind the scenes at the moment, but there will be a Big Parish Day sometime in the Spring.

We are also planning a Parish Retreat as soon as we can get Millport booked for a weekend. There are plans too to lead a project for supporting homeless people in West Dunbartonshire, but more of that later.

At the moment we are dreaming dreams and working, with the power and help of the Holy Spirit, to make some of these dreams and visions a reality. Sometimes we fail, often we do well. Such is life for the People of God. There is an enormous amount of faith, hope and love around here, and it all comes together for the Glory of God and God's Church. May God continue to give us all we need for the future times. To God be the Glory!

Kenneth Macaulay 22nd October 2011

Fatou Mbye

Some of you will remember Fatou, whose education in The Gambia was sponsored by Peter McMartin. Even after she left London Corner to go to the "Big School", Peter continued to support her and on his death, his family decided to continue that support in his memory. One or two of us will remember a trip to her compound, one of the poorest I've seen, when we had our "Parish Outing" to The Gambia some years ago now.

Helen Touray has sent me a "Thank You" letter from Fatou, her school report, and a recent photo. Helen writes:

"Hello from a very hot & humid Gambia !

I met with Fatou and she is doing very well at school, attached are her report from last academic year, up to date photo and a thank you letter.

She is now in Grade 9 which is her final year in Upper Basic School and if she continues in the same vein then there is no reason why she shouldn't pass her final exams and move on to Senior School next year.

All of her school fees for this year have been paid along with uniforms, text books, shoes and a bag."

What a fitting memory to Peter! We only hope that we can continue to support her if she's allowed by her family to progress in education.

A SUFFERING JESUS ON THE CROSS? - MUCH TOO GRUESOME!

The German paper FAZ on 21 August 2011 contained an article by the journalist Wibke Becker about the changing face of the trade in religious artefacts. She noted first that the shops – usually at pilgrim sites or near cathedrals- which offered crosses or statues of the Virgin Mary, are now called ‘Religious Art and Crafts’, not ‘Devotional Objects’ as before. . She asks if ‘devotional objects’, originally intended to lead to acts of devotion, now were made for another purpose. Would a Crucifix now just be ‘religious art’? Could it be an abstract object or even be just decorative?

There has been a long tradition especially in Bavaria to carve crosses with the body of Christ from wood, it was one of the most important industries of Oberammergau, which also made crib figures and Maries. The biggest firm in Germany in such objects is Burzon and Bercker in Kavelaer (founded 1870 and now in the fifth generation), they offer, besides the traditional wooden cross, others from different materials: e.g. a cross from grey slate with a silver star in the middle, “dezent”, Bercker says, meaning discreet, subdued, mellow, no passion, but aesthetics, “something for the modern house for the modern Christian”. Next to it the traditional Crucifix, the body on the cross that of an executed man with a face, showing his agony, terrible to behold, “brutal”, too gruesome, Bercker says. He sells both kinds, they are the same to him, apart from style, material and intended customers. He wants to sell to everybody with money, especially young people who prefer modern materials like slate, felt, glass.

Tastes are changing, some years ago David Beckham was photographed with a rosary round his neck, suddenly there was a demand for just that kind of thing and the firm provided it.. Bercker feels ‘a connection’ to Christianity, not a belonging. He distinguishes between private and business religion. Privately he sometimes goes to church and reads biblical stories to his children, hangs a cross on the wall for his daughter who is afraid of the dark, without a body, of course, to show her that God is protecting her. He sells many products with a somewhat Christian contents, like ‘minibooks’ with small comfortable words, a message “from heart to heart”, Christmas cribs still sell, but especially angels.

He sold more than two million of a small bronze angel, “your companion on all your paths”, it says on the dark red carton. Angels are ‘success-angels’, especially small ones, called ‘hand-cajolers’, which fit into your hand and you can hold on to them, for angels are

thought to be good, kind and gentle. Younger people today fear loneliness more than pain and long for a personal protector. Bracelets with saints also are fashionable, consisting of small parts from wood or plastic, held together by rubber bands, each element carries the coloured image of a saint.. After a while the colour gets lost, the last one remaining may be understood as a personal saint. All this change in attitude to devotional objects can be seen as signs for the ‘wellness-religion’ or ‘cosy’ religion, which many are attracted to today.

Wibke Becker asked a nun why these days not many can stand the sight of the suffering Christ. She said, that people with war experience felt that the suffering of Christ was connected to their own suffering, they were comforted by their faith in a God who experienced pain .Nowadays suffering mostly is only seen on TV. To connect this with Jesus is difficult. For the believer the cross is a sign for Salvation, a sign for an important reality, which can’t be experienced only rationally. We might need some reminder for our senses and look at the cross. The younger generation likes it abstract, but the more abstract a cross is shaped, the more it becomes an ornament or piece of jewellery, or just an object of art, without leading to devotion.

In my youth the cross was present everywhere, especially in Catholic areas. It stood by the way side as a ‘marterl’(reminding of a death), many houses had a corner with a crucifix, called ‘Herrgottswinkel’ (corner of God), there were processions for Corpus Christi or Ascension Day, walking of the boundaries with the Priest carrying the Cross ahead, people crossed themselves when the Angelus bell called..

That is not practised widely now. Angels sell, shaped as candles or carrying them, angel books and statues. Yes, I do possess that little bronze one, so does Angela Merkel. Rosaries hang at car mirrors or round a footballer’s neck, so do jewelled crosses.

In our ‘cosy’ religion, Germans call it ‘Kuschelreligion’ (snuggle-in religion), everybody chooses what he wants. It is concerned with friendly companionship for life and not with guilt and salvation. BW



St James the Least of All...

Here the elderly Anglo-Catholic Rector, Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained...

The Rectory

St James-the-Least

My dear Nephew Darren

You really should not worry about having reversed your car into the bishop's gatepost, knocking it over and destroying his rose-beds; it gives him an opportunity to exercise Christian forgiveness. Your real mistake was scribbling a note of apology and pushing it through his letterbox. Far better would be to have sent an anonymous letter (and to have written it on lined notepaper in capital letters, preferably in green ink, to make it look truly authentic) saying you had just seen what the arch-deacon had done, and then watched him drive off without stopping. That would have taken the minds of the senior clergy away from parish matters for quite some time.

No, never worry about the wrath of bishops; dangers lurk much nearer home. For a start, never incur the displeasure of your flower arrangers. I only crossed their path once – and arrived in church the following Sunday, to see a ten foot high floral arrangement at the front of church. I assumed it was by way of making amends, until I discovered it had been placed in front of the pulpit. I was obliged to preach, hidden behind a large multi coloured hedge, while the congregation listened to what were apparently talking chrysanthemums.

A colleague offended his own ladies and arrived to find that the contents of the safe had been removed and replaced with all those exotic pieces of equipment that seem to be indispensable for arranging flowers. He was obliged to administer Communion using a small vase until peace was re-established and his chalice returned to him.

Similarly, organists are a delicate breed. Congratulate him on the anthem, and if it happened to be unaccompanied, he will assume you were implying that the services were better without his playing. Offend your organist and you can be guaranteed that hymns will be played at either half or double speed, stopping one verse short and that the final piece of music as you process out will stop, leaving you and the choir stranded half way down the aisle.

And finally, never, ever upset your verger. One forgotten Christmas present and you can be sure you will get

half-way through a baptism to find he hasn't put water in the font; at marriage services, the sheets for last week's funeral will have been accidentally put out and when you sit in your stall you will discover where he now stores the mop and bucket.

No, bishops are warm, fluffy bunnies; dangers lurk a lot nearer home.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



"Given the state of our heating system, you'd think the vicar would be all for it!"

Richmond Architects

**Supporting
The Friends of St. Augustine's**

**Castle Terrace,
Dumbarton
Tel: 01389 765578**

Rotas for November 2011

Sunday November 6th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Morag O'Neill & Tim Rhead.

Intercessions: Linda Macaulay.

Chalice: Margaret Hardie & Janette Barnes.

Sidespersons: Vernon Perrin & David Ansell.

Sunday November 13th.

10-50am Eucharist.

Readers: Ghislaine Kennedy & Vernon Perrin.

Intercessions: Evelyn O'Neill.

Chalice: Barbara Barnes & Maggie Wallace.

Sidespersons: Tim Rhead & Ronnie Blaney.

Sunday November 20th.

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Margaret Hardie & Janette Barnes

Intercessions: Maggie Wallace.

Chalice: : Sharon Rowatt & Fran Walker.

Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & Margaret Swan.

Sunday November 27th.

11am Eucharist

Readers: Barbara Barnes & Linda Macaulay.

Intercessions: Fran Walker.

Chalice: Vernon Perrin & Tim Rhead.

Sidespersons: Linda Jenkinson & Jean Carr.

FLOWERS.

Wk. ending:

November 5th.. Maggie Wallace & Moira McGown.

" 12th. Rosemary McLeay & Barbara Barnes.

" 19th. Maggie Wallace & Margaret Hardie.

ROTAS.

We are SERIOUSLY SHORT of Sidespersons at the moment. Those already doing this duty are VERY willing, but a few more folk to help would be wonderful. PLEASE.

Vestry Meeting

The Vestry will meet on Tuesday 2nd November at 7.30pm, following the Requiem for All Souls at 7pm.

All Souls

There will be two services for All Souls on 2nd November, at 10.30am and 7pm. There is a list at the back of the church for you to add the names of loved ones you would like us to remember on this day.

Missions to Seafarers

Jim McRaue from the Mission to Seafarers is going to be with us on Sunday 6th November at the 11am Service. If you have any woolly hats or anything else to contribute to the cause, then is the time to bring them to church. Our link has faltered a bit since Robin Underhill left, so now is the opportunity to get it going again.

Christian Aid

Coffee Morning

This takes place on Saturday November 5th, from 10 to 12noon at Riverside Hall . There will be a table top sales and a raffle too.

Helpers and home baking are needed . Tickets £2 See Tim for details.

Beetle Drive

This is on Friday November 18th 7.30 at Dalreoch United Free Church, again for Christian Aid. Tickets £2 from Tim. Tea and coffee will be provided.

This a new venture and numbers are limited so get your ticket as soon as possible. Please support both these events by at least buying a ticket!

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106 High Street Dumbarton

Quality jewellery -

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Three important family events this month....

Auntie Jeannie Carr at her granddaughter Heather's wedding to Graham.

Linda holds her new grandchild..tentatively!

And finally the Baptism of Jenny, and baby Aaliya, which took place on Sunday 23rd October.

Congratulations to all!



This month: The Allsorts Choir looking very formal, two new additions to the Balloch Belly Dancers, and Simon looking well-pleased after cooking the magnificent Lebanese food for the belly-dancing extravaganza!

Smile Lines

Children of Israel

In Sunday School one morning young Joseph raised his hand and proceeded to ask a question that had perplexed him for some time. "There's something I can't figure out. According to the Bible, the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, right?" "Right," said his teacher.

"And the Children of Israel beat up the Philistines, right?" "Er, right."

"And the Children of Israel built the Temple, right?" "Again you're right."

"And the Children of Israel fought the Egyptians and the Children of Israel were always doing something important, right?" "All that is right, too," agreed the teacher. "So what's your question, Joseph?"

"Well what were all the grown-ups doing?"

Hospital Chart Bloomers

Don't be alarmed, but these are actual writings from hospital charts....

- ~ The patient refused autopsy.
- ~ The patient has no previous history of suicides.
- ~ Patient has left white blood cells at another hospital.
- ~ Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
- ~ On the second day the knee was better and on the third day it disappeared.
- ~ The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993.
- ~ Discharge status: Alive but without permission.
- ~ She is numb from her toes down.
- ~ The skin was moist and dry.
- ~ Occasional, constant infrequent headaches.
- ~ Patient was alert and unresponsive.
- ~ I saw your patient today, who is still under our car for physical therapy.
- ~ Skin: somewhat pale but present.
- ~ Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities.

Which man won?

Little Charlotte was at her first wedding and was enthralled by the entire ceremony. When it was over, she asked her mother, "Why did the lady change her mind?"

Her mother asked, "What do you mean?"

"Well, she went down the aisle with one man, and came back with another one."

Funeral for a Dog

Muldoon lived alone in the Irish countryside with only a pet dog for company. One day the dog died, and Muldoon went to the parish priest and asked, 'Father, my dog is dead. Could ya' be saying' a mass for the poor creature?'

Father Patrick replied, 'I'm afraid not; we cannot have services for an animal in the church. But there are some Baptists down the lane, and there's no tellin' what they believe. Maybe they'll do something for the creature.'

Muldoon said, 'I'll go right away Father. Do ya' think 5,000 euros is enough to donate to them for the service?'

Father Patrick exclaimed, 'Sweet Mary! Why didn't ya tell me the dog was Catholic?'

Loud prayers

An elderly lady was well-known for her faith and for her boldness in talking about it. For instance, she would stand on her front porch and shout, "PRAISE THE LORD!" Next door to her lived an atheist who would get so angry at her proclamations he would shout, "There is no Lord!!"

Hard times set in on the elderly lady, and she prayed for God to send her some assistance. She stood on her porch and shouted, "PRAISE THE LORD. GOD, I NEED FOOD!! I AM HAVING A HARD TIME. PLEASE LORD, SEND ME SOME GROCERIES!!!" The next morning the lady went out on her porch and noted a large bag of groceries and shouted, "PRAISE THE LORD!"

The neighbour jumped from behind a bush and said, "Aha! I told you there is no Lord. I bought those groceries, God didn't."

The lady started jumping up and down and clapping her hands and said, "PRAISE THE LORD!! He not only sent me groceries, but he made the devil pay for them!"

Observations....

Can an atheist get insurance against acts of God?

When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.

Local Area Network in Australia : The LAN down under.

The short fortune teller who escaped from prison: a small medium at large.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she thought she'd dye.

Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.

With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.



‘Wait Till I Tell You.....’

Janette takes a backward glance at October with much going on at St. Aug's and looks forward to an even busier and more exciting November.

WHAT'S KEEPING THE BELLY DANCERS?

On the very last day of September, Friends organised a 'Taste of the Lebanon' that entailed a visit from the Balloch Belly Dancers. Not your usual run of the mill church activity but one that attracted a lot of interest. The exotic Mediterranean meal was cooked by Fran, Simon and Simon's Mammy and was delicious even although TBag O'Neill scrutinised what was on offer and decided it was all much too strange, much too unScottish for her palate! After all, one doesn't get a Falafel or Hummus Supper at the Chippie even in today's international society. A Taste of Brucehill would have been more to her liking - she drank tea all night and watched the more adventurous eaters sample the delights of the Lebanese food. Everyone else expressed delight at the variety and quality of the meal on offer.

Then, as if on a package holiday, we settled back to await the Belly Dancers who eventually emerged from the back room after a lengthy arranging of false eyelashes and beautiful veils. A short film followed urging us to take up the activity but Roberta and Chrissie were already on the ball, having arrived in red belly dancer costumes and wigs. Did they really get on a bus like that? I know the buses are quiet on a Sunday night but the driver must have thought he'd taken a turning for Beirut! Soon we found out that to be a belly dancer you needed more than just a belly! There is an art and a skill to it. Oh yes, the intrepid 'up for anything' brigade were on their feet at the earliest opportunity while those who have yet to master the Gay Gordons found a haven in the kitchen! Time passed so quickly that our scheduled quiz - the Da Pesci Code had to be postponed. All the foreign shenanigans and sparkling wine gave the company a real feel good factor sending them home with that spring in their step so necessary to an early Autumn evening.

THE ALLSORTS CHOIR IN ANOTHER HOME FIXTURE.

With the fame of Ghislaine's choir spreading so rapidly and bookings piling in for their services, it was decided that the Friends' Exec should arrange a concert in St. Aug's for their October event. But it would not be just a concert - oh no! We would call it 'Sing for your (Fish) Supper' and organise a Fish and Chip Van to ensure the suppers would arrive fresh on our doorstep or even at the Church car park. Luckily this wasn't too difficult since Jean and Connie have useful connections in the fish supper field. Soon the delicious aroma was permeating the deserted Sunday night High Street and the crowds quickly started to pile in - some of them not having pre-booked!

There was not a seat to be had in our Community Hall as we endeavoured to get everyone served. The 'loaves and

fishes' parable was a dawdle compared with trying to feed our unexpected numbers. Buttered plain bread and a cup of tea accompanied the supper and serving this was not a job for the overweight or anyone with a penchant for hot flushes! As one would expect, the exec members had to wait till all the visitors had been fed and Maggie even had to enjoy her fish supper at home after the concert was over. And this was TBag's favourite meal - unfortunately she couldn't enjoy it - she had to make the welcome speech to start the concert - supperless! Well, for the record, the fish was delicious - crisp and fresh with chips just the way chips should be!

Miraculously, Ghislaine got the concert underway and the choir found themselves playing to a full Church. The audience commented on how much they enjoyed the singing and the favourite of the evening was Christine Niven and Stuart McWilliams with 'You Raise Me Up'. Ghislaine, Ricky, Stuart and Graham, otherwise known as Rocksalt, added a few songs to the programme and soon the indefatigable Singing Nuns arrived and danced their way to a humorous finale.

In the background the usual suspects had washed up and tidied the kitchen and Ricky, Gavin and a few pals arranged to return the rostra to the Civic Theatre the following morning. Aye, we can't all be reaching for the stars!

THE X FACTOR'S SAFE WITH THE SNP!

At the SNP Conference last week the party's plans for Scotland's future were unveiled with feverish excitement. Soon, when Alex deems it timely, a referendum will be held and we shall all have to make important decisions. There will be many carrots on sticks as the benefits of 'Freedom' are reiterated time and time again. It is reassuring to note, however, that even if we vote to break up the 300 year old treaty with 'the auld enemy' we shall still get the X Factor on the Telly! Now I can sleep at night! Pass me the blue bracelet, Alex!

FORTY YEARS ON.

Surely it's not forty years since John Hardie and Margaret McFarlane (as she was then) got married in St. Augustine's? I can't believe it's their Ruby Wedding this Sunday. But it is and they'll be celebrating with a service in the Church followed by a dinner with friends at the Abbotsford. Aye, there will be a myriad of memories on that day.

John and Margaret met at the A.Y.P.A in the late sixties when the St. Aug's branch was undergoing a transformation from the Evensong Pre Meetings and Hat Wearing Members to a much more youthful and lively club. Those of us who were around at that time will never forget

Maggie's emerald green Noddy creation which ended its days on stage where it should have been!

And so the influx of attractive young men brought an increase in the number of young women, of which Margaret was one, invited along by her pal, Susan Carruthers from Bellsmyre. A.Y.P.A has always been known as a marriage bureau so John should have known what was in store. The courting was generally conducted round the back of the Church boilers - yes, it was hot stuff round there even when the Church was freezing! John's mischievous antics and excellent sense of humour were qualities much appreciated in the new style A.Y.P.A. The social life was meetings, outings and dances in many Churches in the Diocese with the social event of the year every November in St. Aug's at the Birthday Party where the youth of the town and the Diocese were invited for a big celebratory bash. The girls, in rollers, spent the afternoon preparing the food - these were sexist days! It also allowed them to conspire together on who they would end up with for the last waltz and consequently walk home with. Yes, and walk meant using one's feet - high heels or otherwise! A new frock was an absolute necessity for the Birthday Party and, depending on the timing of the store quarter, new shoes as well. It was an investment, after all since a Birthday Party Queen would be chosen. More sexism - only the girls could go for this one! While Margaret met John at St. Aug's, other members found their partners in other parts of the Diocese and some even had boyfriends throughout the Anglican Communion! All that with no Facebook, no texting and no mobile phones!

Then there were the Diocesan Youth Festivals at which St. Aug's competed fiercely.

Winning was all that mattered, espionage was not uncommon and we were no strangers to success. Margaret found fame in the Choral Singing Section of the Festival - she is remembered as being one of the dummies in the choir. I was the other one. We were enlisted to make up the required number to compete and we had to attend all the rehearsals, learn all the words, breathe in the right places and generally behave like singers. On no account were we allowed to emit any sound in case the entire choir was thrown off the tune. Harsh - but it was winning that mattered and we did - frequently! But life in St. Aug's A.Y.P.A was more than just great fun. We learned how to organise, how to commit, how to communicate how to discuss vital issues and we were totally unaware of it. Margaret and John were always willing to take part in all that was going on and when their romance blossomed everyone was delighted.

Soon, they got engaged, married and raised their family - in the conventional order with St. Aug's always featuring in their lives. On Sunday we shall offer our congratulations and wish them many more happy years together.

GOING FOR GOLD.

'And gold was found far under the rocky hillside in Loch Lomond National Park'. When I read this in the newspaper last week I thought I'd inadvertently picked up a DPT Panto script for 'Pirates of the River Leven' where a similar discovery is made. Aye, reality and fantasy are not too far apart at the moment. The Scotgold Company who want to start a gold rush at Arrochar and jam up the A82 with prospectors had only planning permission to contend with. In the Panto it's much more exciting with the gold seekers disturbing the lair of a dastardly, diabolical dragon. So Scotgold beware when mining amongst those ancient rocks! Watch out for Sharon this year in - she's a Pirate and loving it!

A WIN FOR GOLIATH!

During October the first signs of winter appeared with a covering of snow on Ben Lomond. There was a chilly wind and the central heating was switched on everywhere. But not without apprehension - recent price increases were certain to make paying for heat a costly proposition. It was, therefore with delight and relief that we learned of our Prime Minister's summit with the Energy giants at Downing Street. Good old David, we thought, he'll tell them to get the prices down and cut their obscene profits. Some of the biblically minded even compared the encounter to that of David and Goliath.

But it came to pass that Goliath won. The high prices would remain and advice would be sent to the frozen urging them to use that degree in mathematics to check for the most advantageous tariffs and change over. Homes should be insulated and to make it easy for the Goliaths to get their money on time - we should all sign up for direct debits! What a let down and what happened to the sling and pebbles that brought Goliath to the ground!

WISH YOU WERE HERE!

Mrs Fox must have had a great summer holiday in Majorca this year - along came her man's pal, Mr Werrity plus three members of the Ministry of Defence staff! I hope she wasn't stuck in the kitchen for a fortnight!

ARE YOU COMING TO 'AUGADOON?'

On Friday 25th November Friends of St. Augustine's are organising their big event - this year it will be a Pantomime simply called 'Augadoon'. This will be a totally tartan evening and the perfect entertainment for St.

Andrew's Night which will follow on the 30th. A three course Scottish meal will be served with wine included in the cost. Coffee and tablet will be handed round while the audience sits back to be entertained by a tartan extravaganza of music, song, dance and - dare I say it - acting! If the reason for the name is still eluding you, think of 'Brigadoon' - the Scottish musical. This will be the Dumbarton version.

You will meet the Revd Kenny McCanny who wants to punish the townspeople for their sins, iniquities and for just enjoying themselves! He enlists the help of 'the wise wumman' and the punishment is that Augadoon will dis-

appear into the mists of time for one hundred years. His penitential assistant, Nettie McNeb, will ensure that the townspeople repent and she agrees to keep him fully informed of their transgressions.

Gillian will sing the memorable 'Heather on the Hill' and Ghislaine and Ricky will be on hand to keep the party going. Want to know more? Then sign up for an excellent night of fun and laughter. Wear something tartan to get into the spirit - you won't be disappointed. The menu - a choice of two items on each course - is on the notice board. There is also a list for names of those wishing to attend. Don't miss 'Augadoon'.

AND NEXT MONTH.....

The Christmas rush will be in full swing, plans will have been made for our Christmas Party and Carol Singing and the prudent will have started writing their cards. This year I'm going to be better organised and get my ironing finished by Christmas Day. See you all at Augadoon!

Facebook Group

St Augustine's now has a new Facebook Group that you are invited to join to catch up on ongoing news, events, and comments. You can view the Group and join by visiting:

www.facebook.com/groups/223745957683842/ where you will receive a warm welcome.

If you have problems finding us then get in touch with Kenny. Remember that you need to have a Facebook page of your own to join this. Help is at hand if you want or need it.

For others, not into technology, the magazine still gives you all the information you need without the comments!

Feedback from Sing for your Fish Supper Night...

I've been asked by Muriel Robertson and her daughter, the pair who came in very late having been told by someone at a Churches Together meeting that Sunday's event started at 7, and there was no need to book in advance, to pass on their thanks and appreciation for Sunday evening's event. They both felt we did admirably well to cope with extra people who weren't expected and made them both feel so welcome at the evening. It was clear how hard we all worked to make the event a success, everyone was very friendly and welcoming and the concert and the fish suppers were both brilliant!

Muriel also passes on her apologies for any extra work it gave us catering for them turning up at the last moment. She knows of a few churches where they would have been turned away!



The curate's new mobile phone had a limited range but the call rate was reasonable.

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If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,

If you can conquer tension without medical help,

If you can relax without alcohol,

If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

...Then You Are Probably The Family Dog!



Ian Matheson

Ian would like to thank you all for your prayers and support, and is recovering well after his triple by-pass in the Royal Jubilee Hospital.

Cursillo

The next Cursillo meeting in St. Aug's is on Wednesday, 16th November, at 7.30pm.

Diocesan Advent Quiet Day:

SATURDAY 10th DECEMBER 2011. This is a day of reflections with Eucharist, and space for silent prayer and meditation. It will be held at Holy Trinity and St Barnabas, Paisley 10am – 4pm led by Bishop Gregor Duncan. Please bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. Book by contacting Jennifer FitzGibbon by e-mail: j2fg@aol.com; phone 01294823992, or by writing c/o Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH.

Recovery

The Addiction Agencies in West Dunbartonshire are going to be busy over the next three months, celebrating recovery from addiction for so many individuals, and remembering those who have died. Of course, we will be involved in this.

On Thursday 10th November there will be a torchlight procession from Quay Street to the Cenotaph in Leven-grove Park at 7pm. You are encouraged to be a part of this.

On December 7th, Wednesday, there will be a Service to remember those who have died, and an opportunity for prayer, and to light a candle, not only for those who have died but for those who are still suffering.

On January 20th, there will be a Concert in St Augustine's when we will celebrate recovery with song, dance, and lots more. Please support these community events.

Taize Evening

This takes place in St Augustine's at 7pm on Sunday 27th November, together with a Service for Healing. Some folk from other churches will be joining us, but *New Look* encourages you to attend what should be a rather special evening.

Holiday?

Kenny and Linda will be in The Gambia from 7th- 24th Nov. Pastoral emergencies should be initially reported to Tim or Maggie.

Editor: The well known writer and broadcaster David Winter is a former Head of Religious Broadcasting at the BBC.

The Way I See It – Remembering the War

Those of us who can remember the Second World War are now a shrinking minority. Anyone who actually fought in it would now have to be in their mid-eighties. Of course, that makes 'remembrance' on a public scale difficult. The youth organisations line up at the war memorial each year, but with the best will in the world the exhortation 'we will remember them' is asking a lot of boys and girls whose grandparents were probably not born until years after the war ended.

So perhaps those of us who can remember, however distantly, what that war was like have some kind of duty to share those memories. In my case, the most vivid is leaving London on a bright morning in early September 1939 in a red double-decker bus and heading for an unknown address in rural England. In the case of my brother and me it was a village in Essex, right in the path of an invading army from the Continent. By Christmas that year my parents had decided that there were safer places for us to be, and we spent the rest of the war - blissfully, I'm ashamed to say - in the mid-Wales hills with my Welsh grandparents. We played in the fields, learnt to speak Welsh, made lifelong friendships - and were almost entirely sheltered from the reality of war-time life in London and the other great cities of our land.

Mind you, the nightly news broadcast on the wet battery wireless was a reminder that our parents were much less fortunate. Like millions of others, they endured the blackout, the shortages of food, the terrors of the blitz with nightly air raids and the anxiety of my older brother eventually being 'called up' and landing on the Normandy beaches under enemy gunfire. The bombs missed the family home - on one occasion only just - but the trauma inevitably took its toll.

At the end of the war there were the usual speeches promising that the sacrifices made should not be in vain - we would ensure that nothing like this would ever happen again. But it did, and has - over and over again. Korea, Vietnam, the Falklands, Iraq, Afghanistan - the roll-call seems endless; evidence, if we needed it, of the strange addiction of human beings to violence, conflict and war. It is one thing to remember - and a duty, in view of the sacrifices of so many. But it is no good remembering and then forgetting.

War, says the New Testament, flows from ordinary human sins - greed, envy, bad choices (see James 4:1-4). To expunge from our race the hideous horrors of war and armed conflict would mean eliminating each of these manifestations of our fallen nature. Difficult? Impossible, it seems, without help from beyond ourselves. Prayer, commitment, repentance, example - even a private peaceful lifestyle - are steps towards that goal: small things, some would think, but history has been changed by less.

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Regional Council Representative: Roberta Mailley (01389 731863)

Child Protection Officer: Barbara Barnes

Friends of St Augustine's: Linda Macaulay (01389 602261) (lindamacaulay@btinternet.com)

We are a Grandmother!

In the early hours of the 15th October, little Isla Isabella Thomas was born, making Linda, at last, a grandmother! Mother, baby and Grandmother are all well, although Linda is still a little starry-eyed!

It was Mrs Thatcher who proclaimed "We are a Grandmother", so if it's good enough for her....

Baby Isla is, of course, Welsh by birth, but I'm sure she'll prefer to play for Scotland under the "Scottish father" rule!

By then, the Scottish Women's Football team will be world champions, of course, unless she takes up rugby! Gulp!!!

