

In Touch



*with St James the Less Church, Penicuik
& St Mungo's Church, West Linton*

**A quarterly magazine for all of us
Issue 8**



Ascension - Pentecost - Ordinary Time



Reflections from the Rectory

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
Psalm 85 v8

I have had my head in several books over the last while, and two of them have impressed me and seem to have an unintended link that provoked me to reflect on living out our faith today, in God's grace, based on scripture.

Most recently, I have been reading Timothy Keller's book, *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just*, in preparation for our Faith Book discussion on 30th May. I bought and read this book in early 2011. If I recall correctly, it was the first of his books that I had read. I can't recall if it had been recommended to me, or if I had stumbled across it by chance, or even by divine providence.

At that time, I was progressing through the various stages of discernment for ordained ministry. I read quite a few books looking at God's grace and I was exploring the Bible for a better grasp as to what it meant, and what a life lived out in God's grace truly meant in our times. The back cover of Keller's book asks a key question: "*Why look to the Bible for guidance on building a more just society today?*" The blurb continues saying that Keller "*explores how to live a life of justice empowered by an experience of grace: a generous, gracious justice. Keller calls on life-long Christians to acknowledge the fraudulence of a faith without concern for justice for the poor – and challenges sceptics to recognise that the Bible can and must contribute to a modern understanding of justice.*"

During Lent I read Stephen Cottrell's book, *The things He Carried*. In the chapter entitled, "*The hopes of God*", Cottrell suggests that Jesus had been "*searching the scriptures, sucking the marrow of wisdom from the very bones of his faith.*"

Cottrell goes on to write, “*God had spent everything – through covenants, through prophets - everything except himself...*” until he communicated God’s love through a human life, “*and it was through Jesus’ life and death that this new covenant would be spoken*”.

That struck a chord with me as a method for exploring and understanding the Scripture and how Jesus may have come to discern his mission, with that wonderful phrase, “*searching the scriptures, sucking the marrow of wisdom*”. Cottrell’s words imply that Jesus’ searching the scriptures led him to evaluate what aspects of scripture were filled with God’s words of love and with humankind’s faithful representation of that love, against parts that had misrepresented God’s love and desires for humankind.

Cottrell’s words invite us to read the Bible critically, just as Jesus did, and to discern where scripture truly represents a God of love, a God of mercy, and God of grace, who wishes humankind to live in peace and unity.

When coupled with Keller’s appeal to look to scripture to understand justice and grace, these texts may help us, in these times of anxiety about wars, about the plight of refugees and about rising household costs, to see how we may seek wisdom, and choose to live a life of justice in God’s grace with a concern for the poor.

Do these phrases I have picked out help or hinder you as you read and reflect on scripture and reflect on God’s grace, I wonder? I opened this piece with a quote from Psalm 85. The verses after verse 8 are worth reading and reflecting on. They are often quoted in one of my favourite films, *Babette’s Feast*. It is well worth a watch if you have never seen it. It is an allegory of the Last Supper, and its final scene is one of a transformed community; a community living in unity, living in peace together, supporting the needs of their wider community.

As we journey through Spring and into Summer, may you find the time to know God’s love and grace, and be a light to others. As one of my favourite artists sings, *I wish you peace in your heart*.

Nick Bowry

News from the Congregations

Daffodil Tea Result

Our Daffodil Tea took place on Saturday 9th April in St Mungo's Hall, Penicuik. It was very well attended and folks were obviously pleased to be out and socialising again. We had lots of daffodils for sale, thanks to the generosity of Penicuik House, so thank you to Sir Robert Clerk for liaising on our behalf.

We had lots of helpers on the day, including quite a few from the Penicuik Trinity Community Church congregation and one lady from the Marie Curie fundraising team. There was a good atmosphere, and visitors were very generous. We sold what was left after Church the following day, which helped to swell the total.

Kathleen and I are very grateful to all those who donated goods or cash and to those who gave their time to make it a success. The final total stands at £881.42 which is fantastic and the result of a great team effort.

Marion Mather



An engagement blessing! Valah and Dan's special day



Valah Russell and Dan Sutherland on the day of their Engagement blessing in St James the Less, a little reception in the hall, followed by a delicious meal in The Horseshoe Inn. We wish them good health and much happiness.

Gillian Little

Thanks

Daniel and I would like to thank all of you who have prayed for us during his time in hospital and up till now. God has been faithful and Dan is now slowly convalescing at his future mother-in-law's home.

Thank you Sue and Gillian who have been so kind in giving me lifts to and from hospital to visit him. Your help was invaluable.

Thank you Marion for providing hospitality after our engagement blessing in the hall and arranging the flowers at the side door in my chosen colours. We were very touched by this gesture.

Thank you again Gillian for helping with hospitality. It was all beautifully done and our wee reception went really well.

Thank you to everyone who has sent cards, enquired how we are and wished him speedy recovery.

We also thank all those from the church (especially Gillian) who gave gifts and cards at our blessing service.

Thank you Revd Nick for a beautiful service. The address was beautifully worded. Thank you Nick for your support, encouragement and love and warmth you have shown us since we first stepped into St James the Less. Dan and I are sincerely moved and honoured by all the Christian love you and the congregation have shown us.

If there is anyone I have forgotten to mention then please forgive me but accept our gratitude.

The Lord bless you all for your kindness.

Blessings

Valah Russell and Dan Sutherland

(Ed: It was originally going to be their wedding day - but they are still looking forward to this once Dan is well enough. Our prayers for both Dan and Valah continue.)

Golden Wedding!

Val (née Hair) and David McGavin were married in St James the Less on 20th May 1972 by Revd Angus Palmer. Both had been in the choir from an early age, David from age five, Val a little later. The best man was David's brother, Douglas, and the bridesmaid was Val's sister, Marion (Mather). A reception was held at the Royal Hotel in Roslin, now known as Roslin Chapel Guesthouse.

They settled in Penicuik and had two children, Julie and Kenneth. Family and Church have always been important to them and their love of music has been a thread throughout their marriage. David is now organist and choirmaster at St James and Val still sings in the choir, is a member of Vestry and leads services as part of the lay ministry team.

We wish them every blessing in the years ahead.

Marion Mather



Diamond Wedding Anniversary: How it All began



Unlikely as it may seem, I first met Tilly when I joined the East End gang of which she was a member! A mixed crowd of fourteen to sixteen year olds used to gather for a blather on the same busy corner in Ipswich on most evenings, arriving on the bikes that had taken them four miles north to their adjoining grammar schools each day. The gang grew so rapidly and boisterously that local peace and traffic flow were both threatened, so we moved to the local park, disturbing ducks instead of people. Although few were

churchgoers like us, it was suggested that we join a local youth club at St Augustine's, a new church built to reach out to residents of a vast council estate in the east of town. I had attended Sunday School at their church hall, planted on the edge of the estate. The curate couldn't believe his luck when a dozen or more relatively posh teenagers turned up at the hall one Saturday night to join his little band of table-tennis devotees. However, it was not long before conflict broke out, with the regulars throwing things at us from behind a barricade of upturned tables! Realising on which side his bread was buttered, the curate suggested that we incomers formed a new committee, to which Tilly and I were elected. He also nabbed her to be a Sunday School teacher and she joined their Brownie Pack as a Tawny Owl.

The gang had begun pairing off, as teenagers do, and one spring weekend, the club had cycled to a local beauty spot, Flatford Mill, made famous by John Constable's painting, *The Hay Wain*. After disturbing more ducks by our frolics in hired rowing boats, it was time to cycle home. A romantic mood swept over unattached me and I began gathering spring flowers from the roadside.

When I eventually rejoined the 'peleton', I presented unattached Tilly with a bouquet. Tilly's recall differs from mine here: she only remembers the bouquet that Peter, our club chairman, presented to her mother when we got back to Ipswich. This may have been our cunning plan to disguise from Tilly's mother the fact that her daughter had received amorous advances while on a church excursion to Constable country.

Our relationship blossomed and I became a regular evening visitor at Tilly's home, under the guise of tutor in Chemistry and Maths. It proved to be a good formula and by the time I started my studies in Agriculture at Reading University in 1957, we had pledged our troth to each other, unbeknown to our parents. Our relationship was consolidated by daily love letters, exchanged during term time, a good preparation for a greater separation when I began post-graduate studies in Aberdeen in

1961. We got married at St Augustine's, with a Brownie guard of honour, on St George's Day (April 23rd), 1962 and cut our wedding cake at a reception which cost all of £23 17s 6d, in a nearby hotel. Our wedding night was spent in a 2nd Class Sleeper to Aberdeen. We honeymooned in the small semi-detached bungalow we had bought - all we could afford. We named that first home *Holywells*, after our teenage trysting place and brought the name with us to both Penicuik homes, and the rest, as they say, is history.



Tilly and Neville with their family at their recent 60th Wedding Anniversary celebrations

Tilly and Neville Suttle

Proud Grandmother!

It's lovely to share this photo of Kathryn Topham with her new grandson, Aiden Soon Zhi Hao. Aiden was born on 4th February 2022 a whopping 8lb 7oz, and is the son of Kathryn and Nigel's daughter Charlotte, and their son-in-law Wai Cheong.

"Soon" is the Malaysian family name and "Zhi Hao" means wisdom & bravery. A beautiful piece of news for us all to enjoy!

(In case you don't know Kathryn, she's sung in St James' choir for many years and serves the church in countless ways - flowers, fabric, cooking breakfast at silly o'clock for Easter Dawn worshippers, several times vestry member (I believe) and generally willing to do absolutely anything for anybody - on top of a demanding day job and family commitments.)

Sue Owen



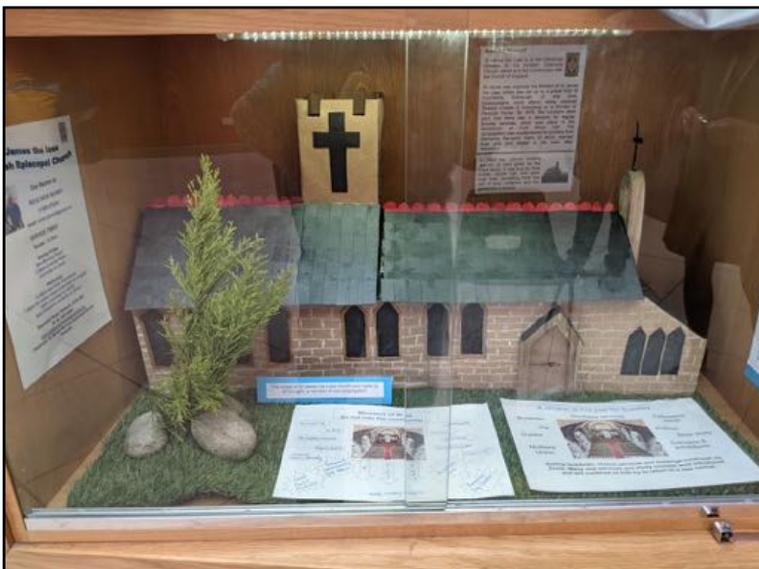
140 Years of Worship and Welcome!

Cometh the day, cometh the people, much to our delight!

On Wednesday 13 April 2022, the church was open all day for the anniversary. We had about twenty visitors throughout the day, who came to look round the building, and join us in the hall for a cuppa and chat. Throughout lockdown, so many have been deprived of social contact and the simple act of chatting over a cup of tea. We rejoice in these everyday pleasures.



Events do not run themselves, so many thanks to all who made our visitors welcome, showed them round the church, brewed up and sat for a chat. It was a long day for us, but well worth it. Special thanks to our high-viz Rector, Nick, who stayed all day and must have talked himself hoarse!



During May we have an exhibition in Penicuik Library; the display cases are in the open space between the Centre's main entrance and the Library. Impossible to include everything, so we have tried to focus on a few significant aspects of our church life. Do not miss the amazing model of the church

made by Jill Drought [see photo], and which elicited a 'cool' from a passing child in a school group as we set up!

Georgina Phillips

The Leprosy Mission

The Penicuik Area Fundraising Group have been asked to support a community based rehabilitation project in Dhaka, Bangladesh this year (2022). *“Since 2007 the community based rehabilitation project in Dhaka city, Bangladesh has been seeking to help people affected by leprosy improve their livelihoods through self-help groups. Currently 14 area management committees oversee 88 self-help groups. The groups provide members with skills and business training, business loans, help with their leprosy care, access to education for their children, along with access to their community and government entitlements.”* (TLM Scotland newsletter)



St James the Less representation needs one more person in the group to match the representation of other Penicuik churches. Would anyone reading this like to join us?

A return to public fundraising takes place with a coffee morning on Saturday 11th June 10am in Penicuik Trinity Community Church Hall (was St Mungo's). In the meantime the sale of a "Linkwords" puzzle (£1), and a regular town centre plant stall are attracting support.

Individual blue collecting tubs are also available. Last year, as a result of the collecting tubs and other fund-raising activities, Penicuik raised the sum of £1500 to send to TLM headquarters.

If the same amount can be raised this year, TLM states that *“it could provide small business training for ten self-help groups as well as providing educational support for twenty-four children.”* (Please see next page for details of self-help groups.)

Example of TLM help

“The Stigma surrounding leprosy makes it difficult for people affected by it to generate an income and banks may refuse to provide loans.



Along with her husband, Ratna makes baskets to sell in the market and was able to benefit from a loan from her self-help group. This allowed her to buy bulk materials during the rainy season, giving her a wider variety of baskets to make, and ensuring a more consistent income through the year.

With your support, more people like Ratna can receive support from self-help groups, helping them to build up their businesses and better provide for their families.” (TLM Scotland Newsletter)

If you're interested in helping, please contact me after Sunday morning service at St James the Less, or by email: ([marianhunter40\[at\]yahoo.co.uk](mailto:marianhunter40[at]yahoo.co.uk)).

Marian Hunter

A life in locks, books, and bars

I had chickenpox when I was eight years old. Confined to bed although I did not feel ill, I was bored, desiring a change from reading books. So I was given some old alarm clocks, which I took to pieces, but could not re-assemble to work. No great loss, they were not working when they were given to me. Then I was given some locks. These were clean, and simple enough for me to understand, and correctly re-assemble. This was the start of a lifetime interest.

Whilst still at school, we had an attempted burglary. My mother burst out of the back door – surprising two burglars attempting to break-in! They fled, abandoning their stolen get-away car. So I had to learn more about locks.

I can scarcely remember a time when I could not read, nor learning to read. There was a large book with glossy art paper pages of bird pictures, little Beatrix Potter books, and a reader on life in Pompeii!



I worked for a time in central London, and in the evenings was able to go the British Museum Library, just off Tottenham Court Road. On the other side of the road in a small side street and a few doors apart were a large architectural ironmonger and locksmith and Chubb's head office. Chubb had a small display window in which one item was memorable. In 1921 Chubb had an order from the Maharajah of Patiala for a master keyed suite, and made some extra locks to keep for display. Four padlocks were on show; the two large padlocks (4" size) were for the doors to the Elephant House. Unlike those on display, the padlocks supplied to the Maharajah were all silver-plated.

For a short time, I worked as a locksmith in outer London. One day I visited the head office of the Bramah Lock Company in central London to ask about a lock. Bramah is the oldest patent lock company in Britain, still in business since 1784, and much to my surprise, I was offered a job! Had I accepted, life would have been so different, but I did not relish the prospect of living and working in central London for the rest of my life, and declined.

The Home Office and Police started several crime prevention initiatives. I was involved with one of these, aiming to improve the security of new houses and estates by design. For reasons unconnected with crime prevention this ran into the sand, and I came to Edinburgh to be a training and personnel officer. That turned out to be a bad move, but reluctant to uproot the family from Penicuik and particularly from St James, I moved to being a branch librarian in Edinburgh. Elsewhere, other police forces and the Association of Chief Police Officers took up these design security ideas. This eventually led to *Sold Secure*, now run by the Master Locksmiths Association, and *Secured by Design*, a company owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Good antique locks are expensive pieces of art metalwork beyond my pocket, so my collecting has been locks mainly of 19-20th century. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (“SPAB” - Britain’s oldest building conservation body) had a project called the SPAB *Faith in Maintenance* project, for which I was asked to advise on ‘heritage’ locks — the polite term for old locks. Sadly this project has now ended. Most of the material, though, is still about elsewhere.

By chance as a schoolboy, I came across a magic book, with a chapter on escapology containing some information on locks. Then I searched other magic books in hope of finding more, unaware that escapology is a rare branch of magic. So I found nothing more there about locks, but I did become interested in magic, although it was some time before I began to perform.

When I first arrived in Edinburgh, I decided to enrol in a metalwork evening class, and went to an education centre on enrolment night. In the entrance was the board listing the classes offered; I spotted 'Magic'. Thinking I might find a metalwork class elsewhere anytime, but that Magic was likely to be rare, I enrolled for the magic class. It was taught by a founding member of Edinburgh Magic Circle, and I began to learn about performing magic. At the end of the year all classes at this centre contributed to an Open Day to show what they had learned. The Magic class had several free public shows timetabled. But they proved so popular we had to run continuous performances, admitting the next audience at the front of the room as the previous audience exited through the back. Meanwhile, a Magic Circle friend did impromptu performances for the waiting crowd in the corridor outside. Soon after, I was invited to an Open Night at the Edinburgh Magic Circle, where I repeated what I had performed at the evening class open day. To my surprise, the President told me that was accepted as my audition, and I was now a member! Over time, I have served as both Secretary and President.



That Christmas I was pitched into performing children's magic, despite not yet having an act. We always try to ensure that would-be bookers can have a magician, passing on bookings to others if necessary. So I was asked to do a booking by a busy performer. He gave me an act, and helped me rehearse it. To my surprise, it went better than I dared hope. Then in the spring I started doing closeup performing. The Circle had been invited to perform at a newly opened nightclub, and I was to be taken along. Again, I was given an act. Again it went well, to my surprise. With some additions, this has continued to be my favourite and most-used closeup act. Over many years, I have performed in hotels, restaurants, and various clubs and bars, for children and adults, standup and closeup shows.

Like many schoolboys, I dabbled in code writing. Codes (or more correctly, ciphers) were also encountered in Scouts, and at breakfast! One of my breakfast cereals had a set of giveaway toys for would-be detectives: a US-style police badge(!), whistle, secret message pen, magnifying glass (Christmas cracker size and quality), Morse code signaller, and ... a code wheel (or more usually, a 'cipher disk'). There were some spy stories in my comics, and WW2 true spy stories were appearing. A German spy arrested at Edinburgh railway station in 1940 was equipped with just such a cipher disk as my cereal packet giveaway! For governments, codes were no game for schoolboys. For technologically advanced countries, their greatest Intelligence-gathering effort, and spending, now goes on signals interception and decoding.

My interests have provided me with material for talks to groups such as Probus and u3a, both live and zoomed. Throughout September 2022, I have an exhibition on locks and keys in Penicuik Library. In the lobby between the Centre entrance and the Library there are some display cases on the left-hand side. The display might change to money boxes halfway through (but that's another story!)

Richard Phillips



Penicuik Churches Union

You may be aware that several local churches have closed in recent years. Howgate church was closed and the congregation united with South Kirk, under the name Penicuik South and Howgate and Glencorse church has since been dissolved. Sadly, the South Kirk building in Peebles Road has now closed and that congregation has united with St Mungo's church to form the newly named Penicuik Trinity Community Church led by Revd John Urquhart. Temporary signs have been put up on the church building to let the wider community know about the change. Much effort has been put in to help the congregations merge and get to know each other. We wish them every blessing as they move forward and worship together.

Marion Mather



An extract from “Beneath His Feathers”

The Gift

"Because of the extravagance of those revelations, and so I wouldn't get a big head I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations." 2 Cor 12:10 (MSG).

On the 22nd February 2021 I entered the neurologist's office and sat myself down. I had hung onto the confidence (that until now, streamed to me from her and my GP) that I did not have any serious neurological disease. After a few pleasantries her pretty smile turned suddenly into a sullen expression.

"You have Multiple Sclerosis", she said.

In a stormy blurry of tears I blurted out..

"If this is the cross my Lord desires for me to carry for His glory then I will gladly carry it for Him."

Recently, as many of you will know, I have suffered some significant disappointments this year, the main one being our Spring wedding being postponed.

But then recently I considered accepting disappointment as sometimes, a gift from God.

"If He has ordained it then He will use it for good, and If we wait patiently on God it will lead us to know Christ more." (Phil 3:10 -11).

Valah Russell

(Ed: Valah's poem to accompany this "devotional" follows on the next page in "Poetry Corner".)

Poetry corner

Light Refraction

Like pieces of shattered glass
We bare the remnants of
delayed dreams
within fragile hearts.

The Lord's hand welds
them together as one.
a panel depicting
a story of triumph and courage
gleaned from the flowers
of faith and sorrow.
A window to furnish
God's glorious Temple.
An eye that refracts
His love to all creation.

Valentina Russell

The Station

Steam blows, shadow swings.
The platform shines as wind flings
The rain into the night.
Light rays splinter in the wet,
Passengers count the time and fret,
And stare into the night.
Porters yawning in a huddle
Watch raindrops peppering a puddle,
And wait the London train.
Engine flames now prick the dark,
The train pants in with draught and spark.
Warmth briefly lives again.
A quick exchange of face and place,
A tired wave, a swift embrace,
A hasty slam of doors.
The train with shrug and clatter wheels
Out along the slippery steels,
Thieving warmth once more.
Darkness splashes back too fast.
And wind and rain still shamble past.

Jill Drought

Chelsea Love Song

A hundred moons now hang along the river.
Proud street moons hung atop the fog.
This light and that light, neon and sulphur quiver
In watery reflected curly snakes.
The mist now streaks and tufts from place to place.
Filtering quietly up Chelsea streets;
The blur of coffee house and face
Stubs out with warmth the ends of foggy fingers.

Head bare and dreaming slow and sad.
How cold this air.
The wind laughs at my empty hand.
You are not here.

O familiar things shout out that it was true,
The timid touch of hands that said good night,
Kind door tell me you saw that parting too.
Knew the sweetness of that Autumn night.
Disgruntled woman in the small box-office.
Tell me you heard him ask for two back stalls,
Saw us come blinking out to see the promise
Of a fresh starred mellow evening.

Head bare and dreaming slow and sad.
How cold this air.
The wind laughs at my empty hand.
You are not here.

Does the fountain statue not remember
The trail our fingers made in her reflection
The gentle laughter rising up around her
Two happy shadows on the half wet paving
Streets hold fast these insubstantial things,
These flutterings of foolish memory.
Winter dusk be kind to thought that sings
Of love born quietly in autumn days

Heart full and dreaming slow and sweet.
How fresh this air.
The wind whisks hope to its feet.
And you are here.

Jill Drought



David Keys

28th April 1953 - 21st February 2022



David Keys, our friend and long-term congregation member of St James the Less, passed away on Monday 21st February after suffering cancer for a number of years.

It was always very impressive to see how David managed to keep going until a month or so before his death. This was supported and encouraged by Kathleen, and they made frequent trips out for lunch or coffee together and with their daughter Caroline.

David and Kathleen also managed some short breaks away during the last couple of years of his illness, though Covid restrictions limited what was possible. They also enjoyed visits to and from their son Gordon's family. It's good to know that David was able to experience the delight of their new grand-daughter (Lyla), born in April 2021! Lyla obviously enjoyed cuddles with her grandad.

David and Kathleen were regular attenders at St James the Less church until Covid changed everything. But then they often linked into church services on Zoom. David was also a member of the church gardening team for many years. He was one of the three gardening "Davids" in the team and is now very much missed by the remaining two.

His funeral, led by Nick Bowry took place at Mortenhall Crematorium on 14th March, and included two beautiful hymns "*Make me a channel of your peace*" and "*Do not be afraid*". It was lovely to hear how active and popular David had been throughout his life. We miss him very much. Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory, David. Our thoughts and prayers are with Kathleen, Caroline and Gordon, Nikki and Lyla.

Sue Owen

St James the Less Vestry Notes May 2022

Vestry met in February and March. There was an extra meeting held on Saturday 19 March 2022, when Vestry took on the challenge of updating the Mission Action Plan (MAP). It is planned to share the revised MAP with the congregation.

Ian Fuge, our Fabric Convenor, was invited to update Vestry on the numerous fabric matters which are ongoing. These included lightning protection, a grab rail for the entrance to west internal door of the church, pointing of church and boundary walls, stained glass windows and his recent meeting with the architect. There were concerns regarding the increasing number of items in the list of active and future fabric work. A special meeting is planned to focus on these items and consider how to encourage others to take on the organisation of individual fabric projects. A joint group has been set up with St Mungo's, West Linton and St James' Vestries, to discuss the insulation of the Rectory, the Rectory roof and how the Rectory may be updated. In conjunction with Penicuik Churches Together a table has been booked for *Penicuik in the Park* for Saturday 28 May 2022. Nick is researching new designs for fleece tops for St James which could be worn at public events to promote the awareness of St James in the community.

On 13 April 2022 St James the Less celebrated the 140th Anniversary of the licencing for services. It is planned to hold several activities throughout out the coming year to mark this special landmark in our history.

At the time of writing, Vestry is preparing to meet on Wednesday 11 May 2022 with a full agenda so it will be a busy meeting.

It is so good to be getting life back to normal at St James' after the last two years of zoom, masks, hand sanitisers, no coffee, no social events and no singing. Wonderful to hear the choir sing again.

Warmest regards,

Charlotte Kemp
Vestry Secretary May 2022

Notes from St Mungo's May 2022

At long last normality has returned and on 24th April those who wished were able to worship without masks and receive communion from the common cup, followed by a brunch which raised £230 towards the Bishops Lent Appeal. However we are sensitive to the fact that some people need to be careful, face masks are optional and communion is also available by intinction.



Our next brunch will be on 22nd May in support of Christian Aid.

A section of the Kempe window has had to be removed for repair, hence the scaffolding and we are grateful to the Diocese for a grant from the St Andrew's fund that will cover most of the cost of this work.

The new audio visual equipment has been purchased and will be installed shortly.

Progress is being made on a new church heating system. We have visited a church that recently installed an infra red system similar to what was planned for St Mungo's and concluded that this system would not be suitable for us. A heating consultant, with extensive experience of churches, has been appointed. He will advise on what will work best and supervise the procurement and installation of our chosen solution.

Subsequently we will be investigating ways of providing better insulation.



Presently our thoughts are turning to the West Linton Whipman week 3rd to 12th June. St Mungo's will be very much involved with Nick taking part at the installation ceremony, Peter with the wreath laying at the war memorial and we will work with St Andrew's on the closing worship event in the marquee.

To follow up on a query from a member of St James, St Mungo's is still very much involved with the care van. It is now the West Linton team with people from St Mungo's, St Andrews and with no church affiliation going out on the van or helping with soup, home baking and collecting clothes.

Ian Kerry

Healthy Living?

Healthy for us? Healthy for the Planet?

As someone who loves, I mean really loves cheese, it came as no surprise when the nurse at the GP's surgery told me I should try and cut down on foods with the 'wrong sort of fat' in them. Unfortunately, hard cheese has lots of bad saturated fat in it and contributes to having an unhealthy level of cholesterol.

Then there was the carbon conversation course several of us attended, which helped us identify the carbon footprint of the food we eat. It was interesting to see what foods scored well in terms of production, processing, packaging and transport, and which foods scored far less well. Clearly anything we grow locally and eat in season has the lowest impact; meat and dairy products tend to score badly for production.

So, in Lent this year I decided to see if I could further reduce my red meat intake and eat more healthily, with an eye to the carbon footprint of my food.

I had been recommended to use the heart.uk website, for recipes and also a simple guide to healthy eating. See the links below.

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/tasty-recipes/explore-our-recipes>

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/downloads/health-professionals/publications/healthy-eating-guide.pdf>

Of course, nothing is simple! Some of these recipes use vegetables which are not grown in the UK, so there is a carbon footprint to consider! Also, some of these recipes use soya, or recommend an increase in soya in the diet, and yet we know that commercial soya production has been the cause of critical habitat loss in other countries.

I have tried a number of the recipes, and now frequently prepare and cook the 'Scrumptious Vegetable Curry'. I tend to make three times the amount in the recipe and then freeze portions for later use. I don't know about you but once I have used a recipe a few times I feel confident to play around with it and tweak the recipe.

For this recipe I quickly ditched the aubergine (the recipe says use half of one!) – it isn't in season and is expensive – but would add in a few more tasty mushrooms and courgettes and use more chick peas. I don't weigh the butternut squash, I just cut a whole one up. Also, I can add some home-grown spinach to the food after it is defrosted to give it some additional colour and goodness. The list of ingredients looks large, but many are spices and you can play around with those too.

You can find the recipes online at

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/tasty-recipes/recipe-detail/107-uclp-scrumptious-vegetable-curry>

A printed copy of the recipe can be provided to anyone who wants it.

I can assure you it is good to eat, healthy, is fairly low in terms of its carbon footprint, and not very expensive to make, and can all go in one large pot. It isn't too spicy, but can be adjusted quite easily to suit your taste for a milder or spicier meal.

Nick Bowry

Renew 26

RenewWellbeing

Quiet shared spaces
where it's OK not to be OK

Based around the NHS *Five Ways to Wellbeing*, Renew spaces work on three simple principles: **being present, being prayerful and being in partnership**. Renew wellbeing in EH26, **Renew 26**, is among the first of these spaces in Scotland, although there are 200 across the UK. This Renew space is run by Penicuik Churches Together at the Glencorse Centre, 4 Firth Road, Auchendinny EH26 0QZ. It's open every Thursday 2:00 - 4:00pm.

Being Present:

Renew 26 has had a successful “soft launch”, regularly meeting with a great bunch of folk, every one of whom has times when they are not ok (and that includes the hosts). It is a time in the week when folk are free just to “be”. A cuppa, a blether and hobbies are plentiful - you will hear lots of laughter. It feels like a place of peace. If that sounds like a place you would like to try out, just come along for the whole session or just a short visit. We would welcome anyone who has a hobby they would like to share with others. If you know of someone who is lonely, bereaved or whose emotional wellbeing could do with a boost, do come along with them for a cuppa and a looksee.

Being Prayerful:

The most peaceful place at Renew 26 is the Quiet room. This room is always open for anyone who would like some time alone or with God. The only exception to this is at 2.45pm when a short, simple prayer rhythm happens. This prayer time is open on zoom for anyone who would like to join from home. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81082696211?pwd=OXBvRjFFN05VdThLbFBIOXVSTFFzdz09>

We really appreciate the prayers for Renew26 as we know this underpins all that happens.

Being in Partnership:

There are a small number of people who give regular donations which means we are now able to pay for the accommodation at the Glencorse Centre, Auchendinny and cover the cost of refreshments. If you would like to partner financially, please email for further information (renewtwentysix[at]gmail.com).

We are very grateful that Penicuik North Kirk have taken on the legal responsibilities for Renew26 and we really appreciate the prayer, practical and financial support we have received from all the Penicuik churches. A very generous donation from one of the Penicuik churches means that we are now able to pay for all our immediate publicity and promotion materials.

Since the beginning of 2022 we have formed partnerships with the Glencorse Centre manager, Health in Mind and the community police but we would like to form more partnerships with local groups and businesses. If you are in the position of assisting with this we would like to hear from you. We are also on the lookout for a lockable storage unit for our many and varied activity resources.

Thank you for all your prayers and kind words.

Sheila Anderson, on behalf of all the Renew hosts - Eunice Astles, Caroline Toms, Heather Nicholas and Joyce Maclean.

Contributed by Marion Mather

Last Word

Baggage! Initially I had planned to take Keller's book (mentioned in my Reflections from the Rectory) with me on my pilgrimage in May. The idea of reading a faith-based book whilst on pilgrimage seemed sensible. However, my rational brain also considered the weight of the book... all 350g of it! Was it essential to carry this as part of the baggage that I would carry each and every day? I can get a bit fixated about the weight of the things I carry in my rucksack, and in making judgements about what to pack and how useful it will be on my journey.

And of course, that is also a metaphor for our pilgrimage through life. What are we carrying that is not life-giving or nourishing to us? What are we carrying that holds us back from a life lived in the present, in communion with an ever-loving God? What burdens can we offer up to God? One of my favourites passages that resonates with me is Matthew 11: 28-30. The King James translation is given below.

²⁸ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

What lies heavily upon you that you may wish to offer up to God? What in your pilgrimage through life do you need to jettison from your 'rucksack', to lighten your load? Baggage, indeed!

Nick Bowry

Contact details



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For donations to any of the causes mentioned in this issue, please contact the treasurer for St James the Less, Richard Finch (01968 620439; treasurer[at]stjamesthelesspenicuik.org)

Websites

St Mungo's: <https://stmungoswestlinton.org/>

St James the Less: <https://stjamesthelesspenicuik.org/>

Next Deadline

Please send copy to Sue Owen at the email address below by **Sunday 7th August 2022**

The next issue of *In Touch* will be distributed on **Sunday 28th August 2022**

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