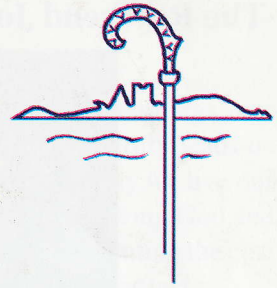


ST. FILLAN'S CROSIER



St. Fillan's Church News

Spring 2011 Edition



This new stained glass window, donated by the Bremner and Barnard families, has been created by Edinburgh artist Emma Butler-Cole Aiken.

Emma based her design upon an ancient celtic cross at Glamis.

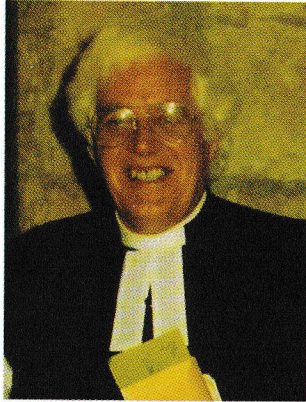
Conscious of the need for light in the North wall she has sought to use light colours that blend with the shades on the clergyman's cloak in the window below.

Also Inside

Tribute to Rev John Scott Page 2
Letter from the Manse Page 3
Dates for Your Diary Page 4
Open Door Page 5

First in a series of articles:
Sketches of the Protestant Reformers Page 8
Parish & Congregational Register Page 10

The Reverend John Scott (1931-2011)



John Scott was inducted as minister of Aberdour: St. Fillan's in 1975, and served the parish until his retirement to Dalgety Bay in 1996. He came to Aberdour from Stirling: Viewfield following an assistantship at Paisley: Abbey. His early ministries were happy and fulfilling.

John responded positively to the call from St. Fillan's because he felt that he could provide a caring, pastoral ministry in a charge which had a clearly defined parish boundary. He was an east of Scotland man, brought up in Edinburgh and educated at Edinburgh's Royal High School. He left school at the age of sixteen to train as a compositor with a leading firm of printers progressing to Bartholomews, a well known printing and map publishing house.

The roots of John's deep Christian faith can be traced to the home and family in which he grew up. As a young man he was heavily involved in church affairs as youth leader and young elder. He felt a compelling urge to commit himself further and in his early thirties he recommenced studies to equip himself further for entry to university. In due course, he was accepted as a student at the School of Divinity at Edinburgh University's New College from which he graduated around 1968. He was ordained as a minister of the Church of Scotland in 1969 and took up an assistantship at Paisley: Abbey, a church with a strong musical tradition where John's love of music was nurtured.

John and his young family settled easily into the pattern of village life and over the years his love of the village and its people grew. He loved the manse building and its situation, and delighted in the beauty of the sanctuary of St. Fillan's.

Throughout his ministry John shared in the happiness of family gatherings and celebrations. In times of private and personal joys and griefs he was present, sharing joys and bringing words of love, comfort, encouragement and hope to the sorrowing.

John's friendly, warm disposition and gentle good humour allowed him to be at ease with people from all walks of life. He saw the best in others and by virtue of his own spiritual status was able to draw out that best.

John was a good preacher with a fine delivery and a commanding pulpit presence. After retirement from full

time ministry he was in constant demand providing pulpit supply to churches in the surrounding area. He was a loyal supporter of presbytery, honoured to serve twice as its Moderator.

He was liked and held in esteem by his fellow presbyters. At presbytery and kirk session meetings John moderated with tact and wisdom. He preferred decisions to be taken by consensus rather than division.

John was fond of music, particularly choral singing. He and his wife, Cath, were good singers. His taste in literature was catholic, embracing wild west yarns, detective fiction, biography, travel and history. As a young man he played and refereed rugby football and he maintained a keen interest in the sport. In retirement he was a respected member of Inverkeithing Rotary Club and Dalgety Bay Probus Club and for many years chaired the local branch of the Chernobyl Children's Life Line.

John was a family man. He adored Cath, his wife and soulmate for nearly fifty years. Her support was active and unstinting. He cherished his three children and two grandchildren and was devoted to his twin sister, Nancy. All of these family members survive him.

John and Cath walked hand in hand serving church and community with humility and grace, and with Christ as their companion.

John Scott, minister and friend, has left a memorable contribution to the history of St. Fillan's.

W.H. Chalmers,
*Senior elder and former session clerk
of St. Fillan's Church.*

THANK YOU

How does one adequately thank people? I don't know where to start. John the family and I immediately fell in love with Aberdour, never having lived in a village before it was amazing. The Church, the Manse, the streets, shops, harbour, river, the people, everyone seemed to know each other. We found it to be a very friendly happy place, and after 20 years 6 months felt it still the same.

Serving Aberdour was a privilege and a pleasure. We were shown such kindness and received lots of help from Church and village people alike. Even after John retiring and especially the last five years the love and help John and I received overwhelmed us, we marvelled at your great care and concern. Now over the weeks the comforting messages and gifts have been great blessings to John, Murray, Aileen and myself. We will always thank God for calling his servant to Aberdour and Fife.

May God continue to bless Aberdour.

In his love.

Cath

Letter from the Manse

As I sit in the study to write this letter, I give thanks for medical care in what has been a rough start to 2011. A good bout of flu, followed by a chest infection and acute sinusitis kept me house-bound for many weeks. It is perhaps good for Ministers and other in the Pastoral Care field to be ill and in need of care from time to time, for it reminds them of the situation in which many of the people they visit find themselves.

When you are ill you need to depend on the care and support of others, and many depend on multiple sorts of medication which play havoc with the system and then there's the doubt whether any of these treatments will ever bring relief or healing.

It is at times of sickness and of approaching death that our faith is challenged severely. For the patient, there's the temptation to ask "Why me?", and to blame God for suffering and pain. For their loved ones it can be a time of watching helplessly, of expecting miracles and seeing none.

An anaesthetist friend of mine spoke of his frustration some time ago. "people expect us to be able to heal everything, but all we can do is solve some problems, always on a temporary basis. As humans beings we have to learn to accept that our bodies and organs, our mental faculties and our senses are all finite, and that no doctor or surgeon can really prolong our God-given life."

The recent death of Aberdour's much-loved former Minister, the Reverend John Scott, brought us all face to face with the reality that death is inevitable.

It also gives us an opportunity to recall the love, fun and faithful service we shared with those no longer with us, and to give thanks for their life and work. Bill Chalmers' tribute to John does all those things.

As we approach Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent which follows, we are called to reflect on the life and Ministry of Our Lord and Saviour, and examine our life against Christ's actions and teachings.

Being willing to face up to our shortcomings, our own inability to follow where Christ truly leads us should have a sobering effect on the way we live our life loving God and our neighbour; serving God and our neighbour, and to do so without counting the cost – a calling that is neither simple or effortless.

We may contemplate our own life and our call to love and to serve, not only against the backdrop of lent and Holy week, but also against the worldchanging events of the first Easter Day, when death itself was conquered and sins forgiven.

John Scott's death and the loss of other loved ones should be seen and accepted in the Resurrection Light of the first Easter, in the faith of everlasting life and the life of Christ's kingdom which shall surely come, in which past and present are united in God's eternal future, as described so movingly in the closing chapters of the Book of Revelations.

This poem was read at a recent funeral:

*Not how did he die – but how did he live?
Not what did he gain, but what did he give?*

*Not what was his Church, nor what was his creed?
But had he befriended those truly in need?*

*Was he ever ready, with a word of good cheer,
To bring back a smile, to banish a tear?*

*Not what did the sketch in the newspaper say?
But; how many were sorry when he passed away!*

Perhaps instead of giving up something for Lent we might do something different. Each day, let us give thanks for the life of someone we knew, and loved, or whose life meant much to us.

And having done that, let us contemplate how, through taking a leaf out of their way of living, we might live our life in a more positive, fruitful and loving way.

Peter Gerbrandy-Baird

Parish Minister

The Minister of Dalgety Bay, the Reverend Donald McCorkindale will be leaving later this spring to take up a new post in Strontian, Morven and Ardgour. Donald and Lesely will be missed by many, and we wish them and their children well as they prepare for their new life. Perhaps Donald will stream on-line with his own production of "A Highland Parish".

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

FAMILY FUN WEEK

Monday 25th to Thursday 28th July
Morning Sessions 9:30-12 Primary 1-7
Tuesday night Family Quiz
Thursday night BBQ



FORTH ROAD BRIDGE WALK



Saturday 30th April
2-6 pm
for

Christian Aid

For further information contact
01383 860151

Christian Aid Coffee Morning
Church Hall
Saturday 7 May



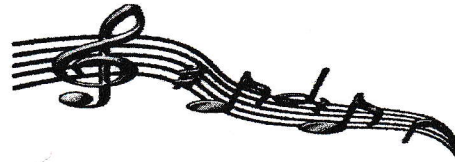
10.00 am to 12 noon

Stalls: bric-a-brac, bottles, homebaking,
plants, raffle + Fairtrade
Contributions to stalls and assistance
on the day would be appreciated

Contact:

Eileen Harper (860151)
or
Lesley Gordon (860030)

MUSICAL SUPPER



A Musical Supper will be held in the
Church Hall
on Friday 18th
March, 7.00pm for 7.30pm.

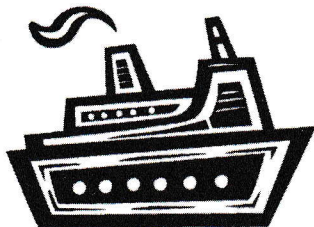
A group from
The Andrew Nairn Concert Party
will provide the entertainment -
they last performed
for us in March 2007.

Tickets cost £6,
and any surplus will be donated
to HELP for HEROES.

Tickets are available
after morning worship, at the
Church lunch on Thursday
2nd March, and from
David Robertson (860297),
Lois Hutchison (860444),
or June Weatherup (860277).

ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO INCHCOLM

Our annual pilgrimage to Inchcolm
will take place on
Sunday 11 September.
Depart Aberdour 1.15pm · return 4.45pm



Anyone wishing to contribute to future editions of the Crosier
please contact Shiona Doig on 01383860791
or send e-mail to allan@hame.org.uk

OPEN DOOR 14 OCTOBER 2010 – 10 MARCH 2011

Another programme of Open Door is nearly over - it has been an enjoyable year with high attendance, lots of friendly conversation and the usual tasty morning refreshments! This year there will be a reshuffle of the team, so if you would like to be part of it, please speak to anyone listed below.

We started with the ever-popular 'Old Aberdour' (part 3) with John Taylor, which was delivered in John's usual style – showing his seemingly inexhaustible supply of photographs with the occasional droll observation.

Next came a fascinating talk on the history of the Abbot House in Dunfermline, when we learned about some goings-on well outside the history found in textbooks!

Due to the extreme weather conditions in December, our speaker was unable to get to Aberdour. Fortunately, we had a volunteer who came to our rescue – thanks to John Burrell we were treated to an impromptu slideshow of parts of Germany seldom visited, but definitely worth going to see.

In January John presented his scheduled 'Vienna – a tour of Austria's capital' – a detailed and scenic tour, combined with an historic background and Viennese music. A very enjoyable morning.

We are now looking forward to Dr Adam Payne's talk on protection of the environment and the Reverend Roy on the story of the Leprosy Mission. Both speakers will, no doubt, talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their themes, and we look forward to your continued support.

Sue Lloyd and team:

Lynn Bastow, Jean Hutton, Helen Jamieson, Jay Whimster, Mairi Waugh, Alex Waugh, Richard Lloyd.

Chernobyl Children

Every year dozens of groups of children from the Ukraine come to the UK for a life-enhancing holiday. For many years a group have come to stay in West Fife. If you would like to help make this visit possible, please collect your small change and hand it to me, or give me a call on 860151 to arrange collection.

VOLUNTEER RECEPTIONISTS URGENTLY NEEDED!

AT TALK MATTERS COUNSELLING SERVICE IN DUNFERMLINE

If you feel you can offer four hours a week: morning, afternoon or evening, for reception duties in a warm friendly environment, please contact Shirley on 01383 626064 or email info@talkmatters.org (for more information, talk to Sue Lloyd or Caroline Gerbrandy-Baird)

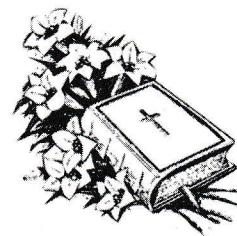
FLOWER MINISTRY

A big THANK YOU to a number of folk who very kindly bring and arrange the lovely Flowers in the Sanctuary each week, or give a donation to St. Fillan's Flower Fund, which is used to supply flowers on the "un-adopted" dates on the flower roster and other special occasions.

Weekly, throughout the year, several bunches of these flowers are given out to anyone we hear of who is ill, bereaved, unable to attend church or who may be celebrating a special event. These little tokens of our thoughts and good wishes are

always very well received and much appreciated and we are most grateful for our valued team of distributors.

Anyone wishing to become involved with either of these Groups would be more than welcome. For more information please contact Catherine Duncan (860 611) regarding putting flowers in Church and/or the Flower Fund or Eleanor Morrison (860 241) regarding distribution.



What is Truth?

Since I was a schoolboy I have had an interest in stamp collecting, and philately is still a very active hobby of mine. Some stamps can be "controversial" even among experts and discussions regarding their authenticity can be prolonged and, at times, acrimonious. One such example lost its place in the recognised catalogue for a good number of years until someone discovered that a definite distinction could be established with the aid of ultra violet light, hitherto unavailable, until that time.

Such controversy surrounds people's perception of God. Whatever we perceive Him to be, one thing is certain – we all have a need for something to 'to be there' which is superior to ourselves. Something to which we can relate especially in times of need, anguish, and joy. Atheists are known to have cried out to "God" in extreme circumstances.

"Don't even think He isn't there
At home, outside, or anywhere
In joy, in fear, in need, in sighs,
His presence will materialise
With faith be sure that you will find
His help is there – right in your mind."

For years since I was a youth, I assumed from the way others spoke of "God" that He was an animate person. A generous, kind-hearted father figure maybe, and the epitome of all that is good, and present when found in other people's kindly actions, thinking and spirit. This could be so. St Paul wrote: "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror" and I imagine a distorted mirror such as one finds in a funfair, or as I recall at Madame Trusaud's. Our inadequate perception (suggested by St Paul) of the Almighty may be similar to my view of a Picasso painting where some bits are recognisable but all muddled up making the whole almost unreal, almost incomprehensible. Perhaps the reason for our lack of focus (if, as I have found as I grow older, the world becomes grey and is no longer black and white as before) stems from our incomplete understanding. Someone once stated that "It all happens in a man's mind", and I suppose that could be true in that all of which we can be possibly aware is that which we have experienced in our lives. In this matter therefore, truth will elude us until we meet our maker – or come face to face with ourselves or our conscience. St Paul obviously believed this to be so as he continued: "Now I know in part; then I shall know fully" (Corinthians 13:12)

Pontius Pilate responded to Jesus' statement "I have come into the world for this - to bear testimony to the Truth" by asking "What is Truth?" (John 18: 37 &38). No answer to this question is recorded. Truth is what one sincerely believes, thus what is truth to you is not necessarily truth to me.

Hence the whole question of what God is, may partially be related to the fact that we are all different, many of us thinking differently, believing sincerely to establish what we consider the truth for us and living our lives as the concepts of our minds or upbringing dictate. My personal perception dictates that life is far more comfortable for me when I successfully follow the precepts set down for our good behaviour than when I transgress. God, therefore, may be all things to all men.

As a stamp collector, I was greatly taken with W H Auden's stanza from "Friday's Child":

"All proofs and disproof's that we tender
Of His existence are returned
Unopened to the sender"

I feel, however, that W H Auden must have the wrong address, as our human weakness forces us to feel that He (or a superior being) exists, but what He is to me may not be what He is to you.

Maybe individual conscience determines His silent response to each one of us and provides a clue as to the pathway of truth for us all?

Bill Cochrane

Sincere apologies from the editor!

In the last issue through the wonders of cut and paste I inadvertently failed to include the complete version of Dave Crawford's article on hand clapping in Church, please now find the article in its entirety.

HAND CLAPPING IN CHURCH

Over the last few years I have noticed the progressive development of hand-clapping during worship in various religious services generally.

In particular, there appears to be a growing tendency for members of congregations to clap their hands while singing certain items of praise.

I almost said rhythmic clapping, but that is where the problem lies.

One has only to watch a show on television where there is a live audience to observe the enthusiastic clapping of hands to the music being performed. What is wrong with that you ask ? Its not uncommon for people to instinctively tap their feet, snap their fingers etc to a good going tune.

However, what comes naturally to some in the way of pulse and rhythm unfortunately does not occur in others.

In consequence, the resultant hand clapping is invariably out of synchronisation with the music, i.e., clapping on the incorrect beat hence moving the accent to the wrong place relative to the musical time signature and therefore compromising the whole value of the praise. The affect might be compared to a platoon of soldiers marching out of step, the emphasis being in the wrong place.

Although hand clapping may be praiseworthy, this practice raises a few questions; is it done because God wants us to do it ?, is it presumptuous ?, is it for our own benefit ? or is just because we enjoy doing it ?

Furthermore, what is the real origin of hand clapping along with praise ?, is it from heaven or mankind ?. Since clapping hands is a reasonably recent practice does that mean that Christians have not been worshipping God in an acceptable way until now ?

Drums for example do not have a melody line and therefore would be unacceptable in praise to God because they do not give the "fruit of the lips" the type of praise specifically requested in the New Testament (Hebrews 13:15). Surely hand clapping falls into this category as the hands are not musical instruments.

I have found a few references to hand clapping in the Old Testament; Psalms 47:1,2 "O clap your hands, all peoples; shout to God with the voice of joy. For the Lord Most High is to be feared, a great King over all the earth." Psalms 98:8 reads, "Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord." Isaiah 55:12 says, "And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

The last two texts are obviously symbolic and can be compared to expressions in Revelation of "harpers harping" (Rev. 14:2). Psalm 98 refers not only to clapping but to instrumental music in verses 5 and 6. Therefore, if the text permitted clapping in worship today, it would also authorise instrumental music.

Psalms 47 has nothing to do with rhythmic hand clapping to music. At most, it might be parallel to Psalms 150 which commands the use of instrumental music to praise God along with other physical forms of worship of the Old Testament. It has no relevance in determining the kind of spiritual worship which God wants under the New Covenant.

I can not find any references to hand clapping in the New Testament although I am willing to be corrected on this point. In addition, there is absolutely no indication that it was a part of the worship of churches for hundreds of years after Christ. That fact should give concern to all who defend it in worship.

Earlier this year I had the privilege of playing the organ for the annual World day of Prayer during which a number of instrumentalists took part. On that occasion I noted a substantial amount of hand clapping during some of the hymns, even more pronounced as the clapping was out of time with the music!! Only ONE person in the entire congregation clapped at the correct time on the subordinate beats.

In conclusion, if hand clapping were to become fashionable in St Fillan's please copy Catherine Duncan to get it right !!

Dave Crawford

Sketches of the Protestant Reformers (I)

At the time of the 450th anniversary of the Scottish Reformation last year, there was an upsurge in interest in the history of the church in general, and of the Protestant churches in particular. Among the questions asked were: where and why did Protestant churches arise, and who were the main figures responsible?

This article begins a short series exploring the life, the work, and the context of some of the key movers behind the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. It is hoped that in due course, further articles in the series will cover such important figures as Huldrych Zwingli, John Calvin, and John Knox.

Dr Paul T Nimmo
Meldrum Lecturer in Theology
New College

Martin Luther (i) (1483-1546)

Martin Luther is renowned as the first of the great Protestant reformers of the church. While a number of different movements and individuals had wished and attempted to reform the medieval church in the centuries prior to Luther, it is with Luther that the breakthrough of this reforming impulse is generally considered to have taken place. This breakthrough not only brought with it new dimensions to the beliefs and practices of the churches, but also brought in its wake political and military consequences that would change the face of Europe.

Luther was born the eldest of a family of nine in a small village in Saxony. Unusually for his time, and courtesy of the graft of his parents, he was given a good education at a variety of schools. In due course, in 1501, he began to attend the University of Erfurt, where he completed a degree in the liberal arts and thereafter made plans to study law. Just at this transition point, however, in 1505, Luther was caught in a summer thunderstorm: fearing for his life, he promised to St Anna that he would become a monk if he were saved. True to his word, and in face of the wrath of his father, he became a novice at the Erfurt convent of Augustinian monks later that summer. In the monastery, Luther kept the monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and embarked upon an intense study of the Bible. He was later selected for further academic work, and embarked on theological studies first in Erfurt in Thuringia and then in Wittenberg in Saxony.

Graduating in 1512, he took on a teaching post in Wittenberg with the approval of the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, and soon after assumed preaching duties in the town church as well.

Over the ensuing years, two dimensions of Luther's thinking interacted with significant consequences. The first was his ongoing commitment to the Bible: he viewed the text not only as an intellectual resource for academic theology, but also as a living text for personal meditation. He taught a number of classes on books of the Bible, and began to see the truths of Scripture in their own internal relationships rather than simply considering them in light of the official teaching of the church.

The second was his ongoing fear of God: for Luther, standing before Christ as Ruler and Judge was a quite terrifying prospect ... it is no wonder that he stumbled on the prayers the first time he celebrated the Mass. The great question for Luther, a scrupulously obedient monk, was that of how a sinful human being could find ever righteousness before the face of God.

These two dimensions of thought collided in his discovery during this period that God's righteousness is not based on demanding but on giving, not on the Law but on the Gospel, not on works but on faith.

This discovery became known as the doctrine of 'justification by faith'. It was something of a revolution in theological thinking, but it was not the spark which ignited the Reformation as a whole.

That spark was the famous 95 theses of Luther against the practice of indulgences, which he apocryphally posted to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg in 1517. Indulgences were a medieval practice of the church by means of which one could pay money to the church in order to compensate for sins that had been committed and punishments that were due, whether in respect of oneself or of one's friends or relatives. Luther opposed the practice of indulgences on the grounds that they had no scriptural basis and that they led people away from true relationship with God.

This view – combined with a series of other writings attesting his new theological position – led to the church opening a heresy trial in respect of Luther in 1518.

In a series of key writings in 1520, it became clear that Luther was not merely embarking on a piecemeal attack on the church and its practice of indulgences. Instead, Luther wanted to renew the whole church and to reform its theology on the basis of the Gospel, moving away from what he saw as the nonscriptural belief and practice that was prevalent in his day. His writings not only found a ready audience amongst the people of Saxony, but, aided by the recently-invented printing press, soon spread his fame throughout much of Europe. His programme of renewal appealed to many and was nothing short of revolutionary in content. It required wholesale changes to church practice in many respects, including to the sevenfold nature of the sacraments, the practice of private masses, the practice of indulgences, the use of Latin in the liturgy, the absence of congregational singing, and the existence of religious orders. Moreover, Luther offered an alternative to existing church dogma in respect of his theological understanding of – among other things – the authority of the pope, the centrality of Scripture, the place of church tradition, the understanding of the mass, the significance of good works and merit, and the freedom of the will.

Summoned to a court of the church in Worms in 1521, Luther refused to renounce his views. As a result, an imperial ban was pronounced upon him: all his books were to be destroyed and he and his followers were to be arrested on sight. Throughout this period, Luther was indebted to the Elector Frederick, who not only offered him political support but also sheltered him: the Elector went so far as to stage a mock kidnapping of Luther in order to smuggle him away to safety in one of his castles, the Wartburg. In this security and isolation, away from ecclesiastical pressures, Luther embarked on a number of different projects, the most important of which was to translate the New Testament from Greek into German.

Meanwhile, however, while Luther worked away in peace, there were significant changes afoot in the world beyond the Wartburg.



The impulse of reformation that he had initiated continued to grow in power and effect in his absence, drawing into its sphere of influence a number of different forces who capitalised on the initial turbulence caused by Luther in different ways.

Some of these forces, when unleashed, had dramatic consequences. First, Luther's questioning of the binding force of monastic vows and of the demand for monastic celibacy led him to recommend that it was up to each individual monk or nun to decide for themselves whether to stay in religious orders or not. Many preferred to leave, and the so-called 'exodus' from the monasteries began in January 1522, from the Wittenberg chapter of Augustinian Hermits to which Luther originally belonged. Second, while Luther's work encouraged a reform of church worship in a variety of ways, for some ardent spirits, spurred on by followers of the emergent Anabaptist sect, the pace and scope of reform was not enough. During Luther's absence from Wittenberg, armed students prevented priests celebrating private masses, and townsfolk stormed churches and burned altars, crucifixes, icons, saints' pictures and statues.

Luther was forced to return from the Wartburg to preach against such excess and to promote less violent reform.

Third, the Reforming spirit spread far beyond Wittenberg, and sometimes led to dramatic consequences not envisioned by Luther. Thomas Müntzer, originally a follower of Luther, took his teaching in radical new directions, and encouraged the peasants of Thuringia to rebel against their rulers and to set up theocratic regimes instead. Filled with indignation at the injustice of their situation, the peasants did indeed revolt, in a chaotic way which involved gross atrocities. But the 'Peasants' War' of 1525 was in truth more of a massacre than a war: the rebellion was crushed, and the peasants bore many radical atrocities in turn. Throughout, Luther had opposed Müntzer and the rebellion stridently, and thus lost the trust of the peasants; but he was nonetheless held responsible for initiating the devastation by the Catholic authorities. In this situation, Luther was under attack from both sides.

Both in Wittenberg in 1522 and in the Peasants' War of 1525, Luther displayed a preference for reformation rather than revolution. Luther thus situated himself and his movement firmly under the power and patronage of the secular authorities of his day, believing that Christians should obey the secular ruling authorities unless their faith was actively being compromised.

Luther considered that the peasants had not only broken their legal obligation of allegiance to their rulers, but that they were also guilty of violating the peace and – in claiming the Gospel as justification – of blasphemy. For all his reforming spirit, Luther remained rather conservative in some ways, and famously so in his

retention of much of the anti-Semitic polemic which plagued medieval theology and culture.

By the time of the Peasants' War, it became clear to all parties that the reforming movement was not a monolithic programme, but was divided into several different strands. First, there were the Anabaptists and radical Reformers mentioned above – those who, among other differences, tended to reject Luther's continuation of the practice of infant baptism and his teaching on the separation of church and state. Second, there were the Swiss Reformers: key figures in this movement will feature in future articles, but suffice to say for the present that these Reformers had a very different understanding of the Lord's Supper than did Luther. Third, there was the humanist scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam (and his followers), who initially supported the trends of the Reformation, but who later disagreed significantly with Luther on matters such as the freedom of the will. In each case, even where there might have been a certain impulse to political unity among the Reformers, it was often thwarted by the absence of theological agreement.

Indeed, Luther's later years were dominated by growing estrangements between the reforming groups. In Germany at least, however, the Lutheran movement carried the day, and its pre-eminent status was confirmed by the adoption by most German Protestants of the (Lutheran) Augsburg Confession in 1530.

After the tumultuous events of the mid-1520's, and with the place of the Reformation at least tentatively secure, Luther devoted most of his time to university work and to the practical questions of Protestant politics and church life. He worked to educate Christians in the new understanding of the faith, writing wrote a number of teaching aids – notably the Large and Small Catechisms, which included material on the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments.

Meanwhile he also attended to his pastoral and academic duties: he remained a preacher in Wittenberg, and was reappointed Dean of the Faculty of Theology in Wittenberg in 1535. Domestically, he married Katharina von Bora, an ex-nun, in 1525, and the couple moved into a former monastery. They raised six children and Katharina busied herself beyond the family with taking in boarders and cultivating the land. As the years progressed, Luther's health – which had never been robust – deteriorated. He died in Eisleben, the town of his birth, in February 1546.

Luther was certainly the first and most famous Reformer who managed to make a significant breakthrough against the church of his day; but he was far from being the only one. In the next article we will move from Wittenberg to Zürich, and pick up the tale of Huldrych Zwingli.

Re-Structuring Dunfermline Presbytery

All Presbyteries in the Church of Scotland are undertaking a "Presbytery Review", aimed at reducing the number of Ministers and other Church workers by some 234 by 2014.

Dunfermline Presbytery has been ordered to ensure fewer 'Ministries' will operate in its bounds by 2014; one-half has gone already by allowing Saline and Blairgone only an 0.5 Ministry on Reviewable Tenure. An other four posts are to be cut!

Our Parish grouping has now got two vacancies, and Alasdair Campbell and I are the only two full-time staff left. We have no clue whether or when Inverkeithing and North Queensferry and Dalgety will be allowed to Call a new Minister, nor whether Aberdour will be adversely affected by changes or the vacancies in the Grouping.

Proposals coming before this May's General Assembly will include reducing the number of Presbyteries to about 10, with full-time paid staff decentralised from the Church Offices in George Street; a review of Tenure (the right of a Minister to stay in Parish till retirement); the issue of whether homosexuals may be ordained to the Holy Ministry; and the idea of 'Ordained Local Ministers'.

I have to pinch myself to believe that I am ministering in the Church and not in some nightmare of bureaucratic chaos! All I can suggest is that perhaps we should all heed Rudyard Kipling's words:

"if you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs....."

Time will tell friends, time will tell!

PG_B

Parish and congregational register

Deaths

2010 – Nov. 26 – Mrs. Frances Griffen; Dec. 8 – Mrs. Eve Millar; Dec. 15 – Colin McRae
2011 – Jan. 15 – The Reverend John Scott; Jan. 22 – Mrs. Evelyn Nesmith

Things beyond our seeing, things beyond our hearing, things beyond our imagining have all been prepared by God for those who love Him Corinthians 2: 9

Marriages

~~2010~~ Oct. 2 – Rachel Hendry and Christopher Brown; Oct. 7 – Dario Guzman and Nadia Tahar;
 Oct. 9 – Jennifer Snider and Malcolm Brown

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

Baptisms

2011 – Jan. 9 – Samuel Daqvid Milroy; Jan. 30 – Leo George Charles Grimm

Jesus said "Let the children come to me"

Joining by Profession of Faith

Joining by Transference Certificate

Mrs. Rita Chorley; Mrs. Isobel Kerrr; Mr. John and Mrs. Brenda Gordon;
 Mr. William and Mrs. Mary Henderson; Mr. Fred and Mrs. Marjorie Jeffs

Joining by Resolution of the Kirk Session

We welcome and hope you enjoy your fellowship here

(NOTE: Please advise editor of any omissions from above – these will be included next time)

🎵 *"...He made their glowing colours, He made their tiny wings....."* 🎵

There it sat, motionless, on the drive until my husband asked me if I would move it lest it should get under the wheels of the car as he reversed. It did not even flinch or flutter as I gently picked it up!

As I cradled him in my hand I studied this little fellow – a bull-finch – seen mostly in woodlands or open countryside not around the houses.

How clean and carefully matched the colours of his plumage....the bluey grey, the glowing dusky rosy pink chest, the rich velvety black and the little pure white square on his back.....his shiny bright eyes, the dark claws and bent, sharply pointed beak. He seemed quite calm and content sitting there



in my hand - and even clung on tightly to me each time I attempted to put him down, as if to say "No. I want to stay here for now!" After about thirty to forty minutes we managed to persuade him to sit in a shallow cardboard box for a while. He very calmly stayed with us (looking about as if interested in what we were doing) for around an hour and a half before eventually perking up and flying away.

What a great honour and privilege to experience this little fella's amazing trust and to have the exhilarating opportunity to see, so close up, this tiny being of God's wonderful Creation!

We will never know the real reason he was here, but suspect he may have been suffering from the very cold weather and had enjoyed being in the warmth for a while.

He certainly gladdened the heart and really cheered us up on an otherwise cold but bright wintry morning.

Now we just hope and pray our cute, beautiful little visitor is happy and surviving well back in his own neighbourhood, while considering this was truly a case where one could say "A bird in the hand....."

Catherine E. Duncan.



St Valentine

When you read this Valentine's Day will be over, however the following makes interesting reading!

There is some confusion surrounding this day of romance and anonymous love-cards. It seems that there were two separate Valentines in the 3rd century, under the rule of the Roman emperor Claudius the Goth. One was a priest, beheaded on the Flaminian Way; the other was a bishop of Terni, also martyred in Rome. Neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples. However, a tale is told concerning the first Valentine card. Emperor Claudius had outlawed marriage on the grounds that it made his soldiers reluctant to fight. Valentine was touched by the sadness of couples who were forbidden to marry and secretly married many of them; but when the Emperor found out, Valentine was condemned to die.

While he was in prison, Valentine showed love and compassion to all he met, including his jailer. The jailer had a young daughter who was blind, but miraculously, through Valentine's prayers, she was healed. Just before Valentine's death in Rome on 14 February, he wrote her a farewell message, signed 'From your Valentine'. Thus, the very first Valentine card was not between lovers, but between a priest about to die and a little girl, healed through his prayers.

St. Fillan's Lunches

Thanks to everyone who supported Lunches in 2010 when, even without December and all its snow, we managed to serve 1021 people with 81 different soups and in so doing raised £1380 for our church.

A special thanks to all the ladies who faithfully turn out when asked and who provide us with such a wonderful array of different soups every month and also to those folk (you know who you are) who so generously give us paper plates, biscuits, sweets and other items to help defray costs.

If you haven't come along on the first Thursday of every month why not put a note in your diary for next month and come and enjoy fellowship and good food.

We look forward to seeing you.

Catherine, Sandra and Ewart



SOME COLOURFUL
SNAPS OF THE SALE
OF WORK 2010
WHICH RAISED £3311
Well done
everybody.