



Meldrum & Bourtie

Parish Church of Scotland

Registered in Scotland
Charity Number SCO15960

April / May 2017



Kirk News

www.meldrum-bourtiechurch.org



Dear Friends,

The Bright Field by R.S.Thomas

"I have seen the sun break through to illuminate a small field for a while, and gone my way and forgotten it. But that was the pearl of great price, the one field that had the treasure in it. I realize now that I must give all that I have to possess it. Life is not hurrying on to a receding future, nor hankering after an imagined past. It is the turning aside like Moses to the miracle of the lit bush, to a brightness that seemed as transitory as your youth once, but is the eternity that awaits you."

As we journey from Christmas through Lent and on towards Easter we experience the Christian life in the space of three months. Some years this journey seems more condensed than others because the shifting nature of Easter makes it so. The schools in Aberdeenshire now ignore Easter's date while planning their holidays because everything is easier if it can be planned long in advance. This leaves us with the school holidays in the fortnight leading up to the celebration this year, a bit awkward for parents with school age children who might want to be in their own congregation for Easter. The council rightly assumes that the Christian minority will cope, as those of other religions have to do, with a school timetable divorced from any religion's calendar. Apart from Christmas, of course, our society has made an accommodation with Christmas, it is a reasonably safe and happy celebration but Easter? Easter is dangerous. Easter demands a response. Easter is not a nice story that can be dramatised and acted out by the children in a play. Easter has a dark run up of sacrifice and deep thought, of ashes and arrests, of rejection and torture and death in a particularly nasty way. Easter includes the clouded silence of Holy Saturday and the grieving of God. Easter includes guilt and sorrow. Not exactly cosy companions for a celebratory holiday. Yet somewhere in the journey through Lent and on to Holy Week we catch the significance of R.S Thomas's Bright Field. The sudden shining patch of landscape caught in the light that has missed everything else around it. In the relentless drug of journeying there is sudden joy. Like the sudden blessing of a milk chocolate sweetie found in the worthy chomp of bitter "good" dark chocolate we stop to notice and enjoy. The enjoyment is all the greater because it is wreathed in the work of journeying on. That sudden patch of illumination lights up our whole

journey if we do not forget it. It makes the journey through darkness the sacrifice we give in order to have moments of light to turn aside into. I love this poem for its hopefulness held in the middle of experience. Experience that can often be harsh and through which it is difficult to hold onto faith.

We all experience set backs in our lives, disappointments, broken dreams and hopes. Some people experience these things more than others. The church community has just experienced one such setback. Cala, the developer whose original offer for the glebe of 5.25 million pounds would have funded our whole new church development, have dropped their offer to 2.425 million pounds. This means, if we accepted their offer, there would not be enough money for the whole plans to be built and none left over to help finance the running of the new centre. The Kirk Session have decided to reject the offer and ask the General Trustees to go ahead and remarket the Glebe but it is not likely that any other developer will offer much more than Cala. This means we will have to let go of the big plan and look for illumination elsewhere. A new group has been set up to explore other options for the buildings we have and they would welcome ideas and suggestions from the congregation.

Once we know if there is any other developer interested in the Glebe, and have an idea of the finances that might be available for our use, the Kirk Session and the congregation will be consulted on the options for the way ahead. Lent might last a lot longer than usual this year! However, the darkness of the road does not deter even the weariest of pilgrims who knows that there will be a bright field and that their pilgrimage will pay the great price to possess that field.

As we come to Good Friday we come to the darkest path travelled by Jesus Christ to win a battle for our souls. His Bright Field is the illumination that comes from us when we believe and live in the blessing of his love and sacrifice. Love and sacrifice that brought not only the deep darkness of the cross but the light and joy of Easter morning and the greatest illumination the earth has ever seen. With this in our hearts we cannot give up on our journey until we live in the light forever.

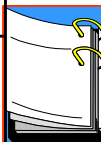
I wish you many Bright Fields along your journey and the courage and faith to pay the price of long pilgrimage so that you may keep those pearls of great price forever in your hearts.

with love,

Alison x

Dates for your Diary

Date	Place	Time	Remarks
April			
2 nd	Bourtie	9.45am	
	Meldrum	11am	Fairtrade Stall
9 th	Meldrum	11am	Palm Sunday Family Service
	Wyverie Court	2pm	Transport available
	Westbank Home	2.45pm	
10th (Mon)	Meldrum	7.30pm	Holy week
11 th (Tues)	Meldrum	7.30pm	Holy week
12 th (Wed)	Meldrum	7.30pm	Holy week
13 th (Thurs)	St Matthews Church	7.30pm	Maunday Thursday Communion
14 th (Fri)	Meldrum	7.30pm	Good Friday
16 th	Bourtie	9.45am	Easter Sunday
	Meldrum	11am	Easter Sunday
23 rd	Meldrum	11am	
30 th	Meldrum	11am	Communion
	Meldrum	6pm	Informal Communion
May			
7 th	Bourtie	9.45am	Communion
	Meldrum	11am	Fairtrade Stall
14 th	Meldrum	11am	Family Service
	Wyverie Court	2pm	Communion Transport available
	Westbank Home	3pm	Communion
	Meldrum (Christian Aid)	6pm	Service of Thanksgiving (Retiring Offering)
21 st	Bourtie	9.45am	
	Meldrum	11am	
28 th	Meldrum	11am	



Dates for your Diary

Date	Place	Time	Remarks
June			
4 th	Bourtie	9.45am	
	Meldrum	11am	Fairtrade Stall

Phil & Aly

Returning to Meldrum on Saturday 9th September 7.30 pm.

Keep the date for Phil Cunningham and Aly Bain, with supporting performances by the music pupils at the Academy.

Meldrum Academy Parent Council are organising this concert to be held in the Academy on Saturday 9th September September at 7.30. The tickets will be on sale from May so look for posters around the town or contact the Academy at the end of May. The profits from this evening are ploughed back into benefitting the pupils at the Academy and the Parent Council are inviting you all to support this event.

Contacts		
Name	Position	Contact Tel No
Rev. Alison Jaffrey	Minister	
Mrs Jean Mitchell	Reader	
Mr W Dalzell	Session Clerk	
Mr W Paterson	Treasurer	
Mrs Winnie Reid	Roll Keeper	
Focus Groups:		
Mrs Ray Walker	Pastoral Care Group	
Pat Patrone	Worship Group	

Meldrum Church Duty Rota

Date	Welcoming Member	
Apr 2nd	R Richardson	E Falconer
9th	A Adam	I Reid
16th	W Reid	A Gartly
23rd	J Walker	B Webster
30th	COMMUNION	
May 7th	A Adam	R Richardson
14th	E Porch	C Simpson
21st	J Walker	R Walker
28th	Alan Dobson	S Dobson

Date	Finance		Flowers
Apr 2nd	A McCartney	D Davidson	E Buck
9th	S Simpson	B Reid	B Munro
16th	A McLean	E Buck	EASTER
23rd	D McLelland	M Watt	W Reid
30th	COMMUNION		M Simmers
May 7th	L Niven	G Smith	M Miara
14th	S Simpson	P Patrone	A Gibson
21st	E Buck	M Dow	C Donald
28th	D Davidson	D McLelland	A McLean

Bourtie Church Duty Rota

Date	Welcoming Member		Flowers
Apr 2nd	I Dunbar	M Green	M Green
16th	G Stephen	I Peddie	M Green
May 7th	S Bousefield	M Green	S Peddie
21st	G Stephen	I Peddie	M Stephen
Jun 2nd	I Dunbar	M Green	M Green

Kirk News Articles

All items for the June / July 2017 issue of Kirk News should be in the hands of the Editor by Sunday, 21st May 2017. If you know of anyone who does not normally receive Kirk News and would like to, please contact the Editor, Simon Hill.

This special issue leading up to Easter is being delivered to all the Community and on behalf of the Kirk Session may we wish you all a Happy Easter.

Rotary Club of Oldmeldrum



Spring is here! Let's dust off the winter blues and spread some happiness and have some fun.

Race Night on Friday 12th May 2017 at 7pm for 7.30 in the British Legion Hall (entrance off the little square)

What is a race night?

Wooden horses gallop and jump to the throw of a dice.

The tote calculate the odds on the races to allow the audience to back their choice of winner

Wagers are small and returns are rewarding.

How you can take part

Buy a ticket for £7.50 and enjoy your stovies and a great fun evening.

Sponsor a horse for £5; name it (eg Purple Haze out of Red Rum and Blue Heaven)

- Ride it yourself, nominate someone to ride it or let the organisers persuade someone to do it.

Sponsor a race for £30

The big winners will be yourselves taking part in a fun community evening and raising money for Rotary Charities and MAIG (Meldrum Amenities Improvement Group)

Tickets for sale around the town, in the Library and if you want any more information or want to sponsor a horse or a race get in touch with Tim Deegan or Maurice Clarke.

Haddo Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday 16th April 2017 at Haddo Country Park

Our Rotary Club will be organising the hunt for eggs and the egg rolling competition as usual this year BUT WE ARE NOT

organising the car entry and car park.

The Haddo Country Park Regeneration Project will be issuing car passes to the park for that day. This is their statement

On Easter Sunday ALL vehicles coming into Haddo will need to display a pre-booked car pass. This applies to all visitors including those coming for the Haddo Egg Hunt or NTS/Cadbury Easter Egg Hunt. Pedestrians and cyclists can still enter for free with no need to book. Car Passes costing £5 per car will be available online at the visithaddo.com website or you can pick them up from the visitor centre from now on.

Taste of Grampian

Come along on Saturday 4th June. We will have our usual stall selling tickets for the CLAN car raffle and the wheel of fortune.

If you want to have even more fun then come along to a Rotary meeting at the Redgarth any Monday evening. We meet at 6.30 for 6.45 and lots of information about us is on our website at www.oldmeldrumrotary.org.uk

Deaths

Mr David H McLellan O.B.E	Distillery Road	31st January 2017
Mrs Kathleen Simmers	Badenscoth Nursing Home (formerly Ardmedden)	4th February 2017
Mr Stanley Moar	Westbank Care Home	9th February 2017
Mrs Anne Littlejohn	Auldtoun of Greens	2nd March 2017

Prayer Calendar



APRIL 2017 - EASTER

A prayer for contemplation on the timeless message of Easter
from Susan Helene Kramer.

Lord you have arisen for ever in my heart

May the sunrise

Remind me to shine in your light.

May the caress of a gentle breeze

Remind me of your compassion.

May the fragrance of a flower

Remind me to blossom in Your love.

May the singing of the birds

Bring a song of joy to my lips.

And in the closing of each day

May I remember to quietly pray.

Lord wherever I am, whatever I do

May my thoughts in joy return to you.

Amen

Prayer Calendar



May 2017

Christian Aid Week 14th - 20th May

Let us act again now, to help relieve suffering and build a world where everyone has a safe place to call home.

Something to Pray

Grant us the courage, of God of the upturned tables, to live a life where faith and politics mix, and through compassion and solidarity with the poorest among us, we may indeed learn to be rich in love.

By Alison Swinfen, member of the Iona Community

Something to Do

In Christian Aid Week visit www.caweek.org for resources, stories and more. You can also look for Christian Aid's calendar of Daily Readings for the whole year.

Church of Scotland General Assembly

20th - 26th May

This year our Minister and some Elders are attending the Church's General Assembly in Edinburgh. It is the Church's governing body and meets each year, chaired by a Moderator, elected at the start of the Assembly.

Something to Do

Pray for all those attending the General Assembly and for our representatives there. May all debates achieve fair and just outcomes. May all decisions be guided by compassion and love, reflecting the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Questions, Suggestions and Answers Forum:

The Kirk Session decided to create a forum where all in our congregation, and community, have an opportunity to put questions and or suggestions to the Minister, Session Clerk or Elder on the work of the Church. All questions, suggestions and responses will be kept confidential if so required.



We hope this forum will allow those of you who may have burning questions but not sure how to approach someone to seek answers or help those of you who do not attend Church services regularly to put your reasons and/or concerns to the Minister or Kirk Session. We also look forward to hearing any suggestions or ideas you think may help with the work of the Church but have not been keen to openly step forward with them.

We have listed some topics below as a starter;

Do you have a question you would like to ask the Minister, Session Clerk or Elder?

Do you have a question you would like to ask about our services?

Do you have a question you would like to ask about how you can help with the work of the Church?

Do you have a suggestion to put to your Minister on a subject you would like to hear a sermon on.

Do you have an idea that would help with the work of the Church.

You can reply by posting your questions/suggestions in our Q&A box in Church or

By email to sessionclerk@meldrum-bourtiechurch.org

KNITTING FOR NKHOMA

A letter from Rebecca Morton at Nkhoma hospital.

“About 3,000 babies are born at the hospital and another 1,000 at health centres each year. We give everyone a set of clothes and in the cold season a small blanket.

I would like to express what the knitting and sewing does for the families here. The clothes and blankets knitted in Scotland have, for several years, been appreciated by Malawian families. It is difficult to describe the living situation. Most people have no beds. The family sleeps together on a mat on the mud floor, hopefully with a mosquito net. They keep what clothes they have in a cardboard box or a suitcase.

Before Scottish churches began sending knitted vests, the babies born at Nkhoma Hospital went home in a chitenji (cloth) on mom's back. In the months of May through July the temperature at night can be around 45 F (8 C). Of course the infant has the warmth of mom but we realized the toddlers and children could use some sweaters and hats as well. All of these things are so appreciated. When I walk through the corridors with bags of knitted things I can sense the excitement of the moms as they look forward to their gift when they are discharged.

And the dolls are the most precious of all with the children. I can't always give to every single child but I sense the right times. It is difficult to capture the moment every time with a photo. They often fear me and the camera but I have been able to capture a few."

Rebecca

The Raven Trust which dispatched our knitted goods has had to stop due to retirement but another group is hoping to take over. This will take time. Meantime Winnie Moir has said the Charity ‘NE Scotland Support for Romania’, based in Turriff, will be happy to take our goods if you are willing. I will still be happy to receive your goods and pass them on to Winnie.



Many thanks once again - 3323 vests received so far.

Ruth Richardson





CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2017

WE BELIEVE IN LIFE BEFORE DEATH

There will **not** be the usual House-to-House collection this year, due to insufficient collectors to cover the town. **But** envelopes will be distributed with a leaflet attached asking if you wish to donate to Christian Aid, to deposit your filled envelope in bins provided at The Paper Shoppe, The Pharmacy, the Thrift Shop or in the collection plate at the Church. We are disappointed that we cannot return to collect your filled envelope but hope you will not find it too inconvenient to use this method.

THRIFT SHOP – CHURCH HALL – THURSDAY 18TH – SATURDAY 20TH MAY

The church hall will be open to receive goods on **Monday 15th and
Tuesday 16th**

From 10am- 12 noon, 2pm-4pm and 6pm-8pm

And Wednesday 17th from 10am-12noon and 2pm-4pm

No large items of furniture please

There will also be the usual raffle and a cake, candy and produce stall. Donations for these will be very welcome.

**OPENING HOURS FOR THE SALE – THURSDAY 18TH 10am-7pm,
Friday 10am-5pm**

Saturday 10am-12noon

Should you wish goods collected please contact Barbara Webster, Dot Davidson, Phyllis Gray or Alan Buck.

SEED BOXES

Please hand in your filled seed boxes to Church on Sunday 7th May or arrange to hand them to Sheila Simpson before then. Thanks

Service of Thanksgiving

As we look forward to celebrating 50 years of Christian Aid in the Garioch Area, we are planning a Service of Praise on Sunday 14th May at 6pm. This is a service of thanksgiving for all that has been achieved over the years, and pray for continued support so that we may indeed reach out to help those less fortunate than ourselves throughout the world.

The Guild



On the afternoon of Monday 13 February the Guild welcomed Mr Jack McGregor whose topic was “Honey Making”. Mr McGregor gave a fairly detailed talk on how the bees make the honey. He demonstrated how the hives work and how the bees live and feed and how they can be affected by mites which are parasites which can be treated by keepers. He explained there are different types of honey flavours including blossom and heather which is decided by where the hives are situated and what the bees are feeding on. He also told us a little about his upbringing and how he was the youngest of five children and how his parents lived until they were in their nineties.

Monday 13 March brought the Guild a visit from Kay Diack who came to tell us a bit about the Pitscurry Environmental Project. This has been created on a 7 acre site to help adults with disabilities some of whom come with care workers. It is a charity which covers gardening, arts and crafts, catering and retail. It started in 2005 as an overgrown site but lots of work got things under control. Aberdeenshire Council provide staff to operate the garden etc and the Buzzard Café which is open Monday – Friday 10am to 3pm. It is best to visit in the summer when there is more to see. Outside funding has enabled larger projects etc to get underway. There is a sensory garden and the site has disabled access. The project has been fortunate to receive donations and is run by a Board. It was a most interesting talk which was well received by all who attended.

