



The Grapevine

April 2019

Reflection from Susan

The date of Easter moves around a lot. The earliest it can possibly be is 22nd March and the latest 25 April. That's because it's determined by the movement of the moon and the spring equinox; falling on the first Sunday after the full moon in a northern hemisphere spring. This is based on a 'fixed' date for the spring equinox of 21st March and the pedantic among you will know that this year, the spring equinox was 20th March.

The reason Easter moves around is that it is linked to the Jewish Passover, which was happening when Jesus entered Jerusalem on what we now call Palm Sunday. Prior to the advent of accurate ways to know the date and time, the cycles of the moon and seasons were relied on. (Hard to imagine these days, our mobile phones and smart watches automatically update the time, isn't it?).

But even our seasons seems off kilter at the moment. We may enjoy the warm winter (wasn't February amazing?). Last year, Easter was 1st April and the daffodils had barely begun to bud; this year, many are in full bloom. We may have to rethink the daffodil cross we make on Easter Sunday this year!

Whenever Easter falls, and whenever spring arrives, our Christian faith gives us a hope that God has a plan for God's whole world, a plan which God invites us to be part of through following Jesus Christ. Just as the disciples did, as Jesus went to the cross, there will be times where we will fall away and get things wrong, but Jesus's death was not the end for them nor is it for us.

Jesus died, Jesus was buried, Jesus was raised from the dead. Hallelujah!

In that act, God's love was shown for all of us, a love which will keep inviting us to follow, no matter what. Trust in that love.

Christmas Fayre - 2018

The final total raised was £1370 which is a fantastic amount. Thanks go to Anne McConachie and all the team who worked so hard for this result. Thanks also to everyone who came along on the day and supported the event.

Christmas Services

This is always an extremely busy time for our Minister. A range of different types of services were held over the festive period and were much appreciated by those attending. We thank Susan for her energy and commitment.

A fun 'pop-up' nativity service was held on 23rd December and all were invited to come along dressed as a nativity character. Several rose to the challenge and we had a good selection of shepherds, angels and even Mr & Mrs Claus.



Tuesday Club, January



The January talk attracted a larger - than - usual audience ;and the increased number of men attending was particularly surprising in view of the subject, which involved cleaning different areas of the house.

Ms. Patricia Smart, in a very lively and humorous demonstration, introduced a new type of cleaning process, called Enjo (pronounced “Enyo”), invented in Austria, but not all that well known in these parts.

It consists of a variety of cloths with a specialist fibre surface that acts on surfaces as a rapid absorber of dirt and bacteria. Enjo action is aimed at being both gentle and hygienic. With the simple addition of cold water, it avoids the use of a range of expensive cleaners - and the chemicals which they contain. Little pressure is required and any residual water is then removed with a dry cloth.

For ease in reaching floors, walls and ceilings that particular cloth is mounted on a plate attached to a telescopic pole.

Patricia spoke of various “zones” in the house, but there are also forms for skin care and outdoor use on such things as cars, caravans and garden furniture.

The session concluded with a very positive reaction from the most likely Enjo handlers; and Patricia’s evangelical approach may even have resulted in one or two male converts.

M.M.G.

Murdo Grant came across this attached poem in *A Gathering*, a Scottish anthology recently produced by Alexander McCall Smith and shares it with us.

“The recent spell of warm spring-like weather in the winter season brought the following poem to my mind. It pinpoints a certain alleged feature of Scottish character, to be grim rather than grateful. Whether caused by climate or John Calvin, who is to say?”

SCOTLAND

It was a day peculiar to this piece of the planet
when larks rose on long thin strings of singing
and the air shifted with the shimmer of actual angels.

Greenness entered the body. The grasses
shivered with presences, and sunlight
stayed like a halo on hair and heather and hills.

Walking into town, I saw, in a radiant raincoat,
the woman from the fish-shop. “What a day it is!”
cried I, like a sunstruck madman.

And what did she have to say for it?
Her brow grew bleak, her ancestors raged in their graves
as she spoke with their ancient misery:

“We’ll pay for it, we’ll pay for it, we’ll pay for it!”
ALASDAIR REID

Tuesday Club, February

Ticks! We may have prised these tiny creatures from the skin of our pets, without necessarily thinking of the devastation some can wreak on human lives through Lyme Disease.

Few can talk about this chronic illness with more knowledge and fervour than Morven-May MacCallum who endured ten years of it from the time she was a local senior school student.

Readings from her fictional account, *Finding Joy* (2017), were backed by a very moving account of the development of the disease; the huge challenge of proper diagnosis; wide range of symptoms; and the very painful, enervating treatment. This took the form of a series of antibiotics and supplements over a lengthy period from the private hospital that succeeded in pinpointing the cause of her mysterious affliction.

The bacteria, Morven explained, are disguise specialists, so that their presence does not always register in the customary blood test, which has to be correctly timed. They can also, in some cases, create co-infections affecting every part of the human frame, including the brain. Not all ticks actually carry the bacteria; nor does the tell-tale “bulls-eye rash” always occur. Because there are different strains of Lyme it would be difficult to produce an effective vaccine.

Speaking so very eloquently and positively, Morven succeeded in casting a cloak over the dark moments of the disease. She concluded on an upbeat note by listing defence mechanisms against this little “master of the world”. More prevalent on the west coast and islands, unfortunately there are no safe areas. Precautionary methods include wearing trousers, preferably light-coloured so that they are more easily spotted, and tucked into socks. There are also deterrent sprays; and a neat tool that safely extracts by twisting.

Finding Joy, which I have just read, is a heroic account of how a young woman, with the unstinting help of her aunt, gains enough information and strength to find a way through.

M.M.G.

An engineer died and reported to the Pearly Gates. St Peter checked his entry list and not seeing his name there, accidentally sent him to hell. It didn't take long before the engineer became rather dissatisfied with the level of comfort in hell.

He soon began to design and build improvements. In a short time, Hell had air conditioning, flush toilets and escalators. Needless to say the engineer was a pretty popular chap.

One day, God called Satan and said, “So how are things going in Hell?”

Satan replied, “Hey, things are going great. We’ve got air conditioning, flush toilets and escalators. There’s no telling what this engineer is going to come up with next.”

“What!” God exclaimed, “you’ve got an engineer? That’s a mistake – he should never have been sent to hell. Send him to me.”

“Not a chance,” Satan replied. “I like having an engineer on the staff, and I’m keeping him!”

God insisted, "Send him back or I'll sue."

Satan laughed uproariously and answered, "Yeah, right. And where are you going to get a lawyer?"

DR GRAHAM'S HOMES

Dr Graham's Homes lie on a hillside in Kalimpong, a cosmopolitan town where India meets Nepal and is spread over 500 acres. The Homes are known as the 'Children's City', comprise of day and boarding schools accommodating around 1500 students and are now more than 100 years old. Dr Graham was ordained as a Church of Scotland minister in 1889, worked with his wife as missionaries in Kalimpong where he immediately saw the many needs of the town and people and started raising funds for the first church, hospital, a leprosarium and a school

The very youngest are only three years old and have been saved from the streets of Calcutta to begin a new life in the kindergarten, progressing through what is known as the cottage system (sponsored children) and eventually being given the opportunity after school to attend college and lead a fulfilling life. At any one time there will be 250 sponsored children who are housed in cottages with staff referred to as Aunty and Uncle thus creating a home away from home. They are encouraged to do chores just as they would do at home and staff strive to make their lives indistinguishable from fee-paying students.

The school is an independent, Christian establishment and receives its income from fees and sponsorship, which are well managed to ensure high standards remain.

Several years ago the Kirk session of Killearnan decided to support one of these children by an annual donation from all elders and fundraising with our Curry Night in October. Zennia was only 4 years old when she became part of our family and we have followed her educational, social and spiritual development for the last 16 years with updates from the UK Committee of Dr Graham's Homes. She is now attending college, having completed her schooling and hopefully will further her education to ensure employment and a fulfilling future.

The UK sponsorship secretary has kindly agreed to join us at our Curry Night which will be held on 18th October and will give a presentation about the Homes.

J.J.

***The Sunday School teacher** was describing that when Lot's wife looked back at Sodom she turned into a pillar of salt, when Jimmy interrupted. "My mummy looked back once while she was driving," he announced, "and she turned into a telephone pole."*

***Lot again...** A father was reading Bible stories to his young son. He read, "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt."*

His son asked, "What happened to the flea?"

Finance Report

I will be giving a full report of the Finances at the Annual Stated Meeting, but I thought I would give you a brief update in this edition of the Grapevine. We have had a small surplus this year of £2,170, and I would like to thank all the members of the Congregation for their very generous support in the weekly Offering, but also at the fundraising events we have held during the year – your support is very much appreciated, and it makes for a friendly community.

Last year, on the advice of 121, we moved some of our capital from bank accounts, which were giving negligible interest, to Investments with the Church of Scotland Investors Trust. Whilst the capital value of these investments has gone down a small amount during the year, the investments have generated about £4,600 of interest, which has helped the finances a lot.

Balance of Accounts as at 26 February 2019

Current Account	£4,255.48
Fabric Fund	£11,753.04
Children & Youth Account	£1,161.10

R.S.T.

Forthcoming Events

The Fellowship group are busy arranging lots of social events for the Spring and Summer months.

Firstly, on Friday, 10th May there will be an Evening of light entertainment in the form of “Mr & Mrs”. Wine and nibbles followed by tea/ coffee with cake will be served.

A cruise on the Seagull Trust boat from Muirtown Locks to Dochgarroch is planned but the date has not yet been fixed. The boat can take 12 people at a time and more than one trip can be arranged if this proves popular.

Would there be any interest in going to afternoon viewings at the cinema at Eden Court? Transport would be arranged to pick you up and return you to your home afterwards.

Following last year’s very successful bus trip to Grantown-on-Spey, another day out is planned in June. Date and price has still to be fixed.

If you would like to go along to any of these events or need any further information, please speak to Anne McConachie.

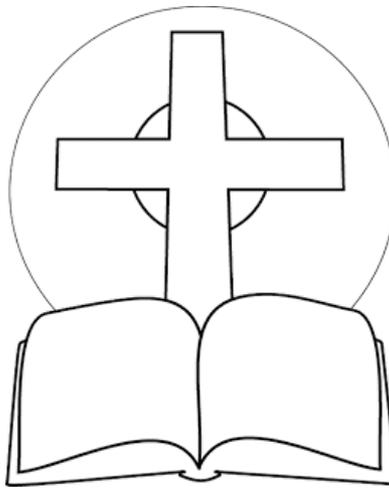
Easter Services

Thursday, 18th April – Maundy Thursday Meal in the Hall at 7pm

Friday, 19th April – Good Friday Service in the Church at 7pm

Sunday, 21st April – Sunrise Service at North Kessock, (time and location to be confirmed. Please check weekly order of service for details.)

Sunday, 21st April – Easter Day Service at 10.15am.



Next Issue

Please send articles for the June 2019 issue of “Grapevine” to Sandra Riach (tel. 01997 466253 or e mail sandra.riach1@btinternet.com) at any time, but no later than Sunday, 9th June.

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