



THE BRIDGE

Magazine of Ellon Parish Church



A p r | M a y 2 0 1 9

Our Vision

Vision

In response to the love of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) we seek to be a people of meaningful faith, meaningful community and meaningful witness. *Matthew 22:34-40*

What it means

Meaningful Faith



Recognising our **identity** as the **family of God**, we worship God with **all** our heart, **all** our soul, **all** our mind and **all** our strength.

Meaningful Community



Managing our **resources**, using our **gifts in service** and **nurturing** our **relationship** with God and each other in **love** and **humility**.

Meaningful Witness



Teaching what **Jesus** commanded, **going** where **Jesus** tells us to go and **loving all our neighbours** in our church, parish, country and world.

WORSHIP @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

ELLON PARISH CHURCH

Family Worship | 10:30am | Sunday | Fellowship afterwards including Fairtrade Tea & Coffee and butteries.

SLAINS KIRK OF ELLON PARISH CHURCH

Family Worship | 9:15am | 1st & 3rd Sunday | Fellowship before including Fairtrade Tea & Coffee and home bakes. | Collieston Community Centre

CONNECT

Contemporary Worship | 7pm | 1st & 3rd Sunday | video | discussion | praise band | Fairtrade filter coffee, tea and home bakes throughout.

EARLY COMMUNION

Short Communion Service | 9:15am | Ellon Parish Church | Last Sunday of the month

CHILDREN @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

TWINKLE STARS

0 years – pre-school children | 10am | Sunday | games | songs | free play | snack

STAR SQUAD (SUNDAY EDITION)

Primary School aged children | 10am | Sunday | games | songs | crafts | puzzles | story | fun | friendship

STAR SQUAD (WEDNESDAY EDITION)

P1-P5 | 3:30pm – 4:30pm | Wednesday | games | songs | craft | Bible story | fun | friendship

CARDBOARD CAFÉ

babies, toddlers, parents, carers | 9:30am – 11:30am | Friday | snacks | story | crafts | messy play | Kirk Centre

Call 01358 725690 for more info.

All leaders and helpers for our children's work have been approved by the Kirk Session and are PVG checked.

YOUTH @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

ILLUMINATE

P6 – S2 | 6:15pm – 7:15pm | Thursday | Kirk Centre | games | chat |
Exploring the Bible | fun | friendship

Call 01358 725690 for more info.

All leaders and helpers for our youth work have been approved by the Kirk Session and are PVG checked.

YOUNG ADULTS @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

BEYOND

16 - 25 | 7:30pm – 9pm | Sunday | Kirk Centre | chat | video | food
Exploring & discussing the Bible | and other events

PRAYER @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

FRIDAY MORNING PRAYER

Alternate Fridays | 7:15am | Ellon Parish Church | worship | liturgy | prayer
| all welcome | Fairtrade tea & coffee

SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER

Sunday | 9:45am | Ellon Parish Church | prayer for those leading the service
| all welcome to join in this prayer time

PRAYER BOX


Always available | Under the sign outside Ellon Parish Church building | drop a
note in the box for someone or something you'd like the church to pray for |
confidentiality is always respected

PERSONAL & PASTORAL PRAYER

If you or a loved one, or someone you know, would like pastoral or prayer support, we will
be delighted to offer this either through prayer on a Sunday morning, or by visiting your or
their home to offer support. Please speak to Alastair, your elder or Edith in the Kirk Centre
Office. Confidentiality is always respected.

HOLYWEEK

Ecumenical Services 2019



Monday 15 April | 7:30pm | Ecumenical Worship Service | St Mary-on-the-Rock

Tuesday 16 April | 7:30pm | Ecumenical Worship Service | Ellon Parish Church

Wednesday 17 April | 7:30pm | Ecumenical Worship Service | St Mary-on-the-Rock

Thursday 18 April | 7:30pm | Ecumenical Worship Service | Ellon Parish Church

Friday 19 April | 10:30am | Walk of Witness | from St Mary-On -The-Rock to Ellon Parish Church

Friday 19 April | 7:30pm | Ecumenical Worship Service | Ellon Baptist Church

Sunday 21 April | 7am | Sunrise Easter Service | at the Old Bridge over the Ythan | refreshments after at Ellon Parish Church

Refreshments and fellowship after each service or event.

See individual church's websites / noticeboards for details of "Stripping The Altar" service, "Easter Eve" service and individual Easter Day services.



Ellon Churches *Together*

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER

*Our Parish Minister **Rev Alastair Bruce** muses on Prayer.*



According to data released by Amazon on the most highlighted passage in Kindle ebooks, the most popular passage from the Bible is one on reducing anxiety and finding peace:

Philippians 4:6-7 (New International Version) “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

I’ve been thinking about prayer recently and our Kirk Session has been thinking about how to develop prayer opportunities in Ellon Parish Church. In the lead up to Easter we remember various moments when Jesus prayed:

At the last supper Jesus had with His friends “He took bread, gave thanks...” Luke 22:19. Before arrested but knowing what He would have to face Jesus cried out “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” Luke 22:42. On the cross Jesus prayed for those who put Him

there “Father, forgive them, they don’t know what they are doing” Luke 23:34. As He felt the weight of the world’s brokenness and the brokenness of His body He cried out, “My God, why have you forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46

We have just completed the current Alpha Course exploring the basics of the Christian faith. One of the weeks is entitled “Why and How do I Pray?”. Some of the folks interviewed on the videos said: “I still pray even though I question a lot of it, doubt a lot of it I still find myself praying, often.”, “I pray, in my own way”, “I don’t pray much now because I have a lot now”, “I guess I pray when I’m in trouble or when I really want something”, “Every day, I pray to talk to God”.

Some think of prayer as something reserved for a daily act before sleep. For some it’s reciting a prayer in various contexts out of habit not really knowing what it’s about. Perhaps a quick plea when in trouble or looking for a parking space or, in our house, a beloved lost toy! Perhaps when something is wanted. Perhaps as a last resort. Thanks, forgiveness for enemies, despair, pleading...

Jesus prayed about everything from food to despair, grief to joy, petition to submission and sometimes just to spend time with the Father and rest. Prayer is multi-faceted communication between us and our God. Generally the reasons why people pray have one thing in common; for one reason or another they, consciously or unconsciously, feel a need to reach out to something beyond themselves.

In the Christian community our faith and relationship with God is strengthened, deepened in spending time with God, talking with God: Prayer. When we gather together we join our hearts and remember why we are there by including God in the conversation: Prayer. When things are great we thank God together: Prayer. When things are hard we plead to the one greater than us together: Prayer. When we spend listening rather than talking: Prayer. Whether out loud, in our own hearts and minds, in a large group on a Sunday or sharing life outside Costcutter and bringing needs to God right there and then, being a part of the Christian community is not just sharing life with each other, it’s sharing life with God and each other: Prayer.

I wonder what your experience of talking with God is? We are going to have a feature about it next edition and I'd love to hear from you about your experience of prayer. What is prayer to you? Why and how do you pray? Send me your thoughts
abruce@churchofscotland.org.uk

or if you'd rather write it down then put it in an envelope marked for Alastair Bruce and hand it in to the Kirk Centre Office.

Whatever life holds for you this Easter, try praying.

ACTIVITY DAYS

Nicola Bruce and Rory McKinnon tell us about the recent Activity Days which took place on 12th and 13th February.



In February we had our most recent Activity Days where we became Guardians of Ancora once again. We discovered the stories of the Ten Commandments and explored the parable of the wise and foolish builders and needing good foundations. We had a look at, the parable of the good Samaritan and the most important command to love God and love our neighbours as ourselves, do this and we can't go far wrong! We have many roles at the club from the children attending, set up and clear away, the adult helpers, the band, prayer people and of course the hospitality team who keep us fed and watered. But why do all these people help? At each club we do a "Hot Seat" where someone from the team is interviewed about life and faith, likes and dislikes and anything else the children decide to ask them! So in thinking of why people help I thought we could "Hot Seat" Rory Mackinnon, a 14yr old youth helper (and *Godbrother to James*) who travels from Musselburgh, East Lothian up to Ellon at every chance he gets to come and help at our club. Why? Let's find out:

Q1: Rory, how long have you been involved in holiday clubs/activity days?

I went to my first holiday club while my mum was still pregnant so 14 years.



Q2: Why do you help at activity days?

I love being able to connect with the kids through God and I love seeing how amazed they are and seeing God working in them.

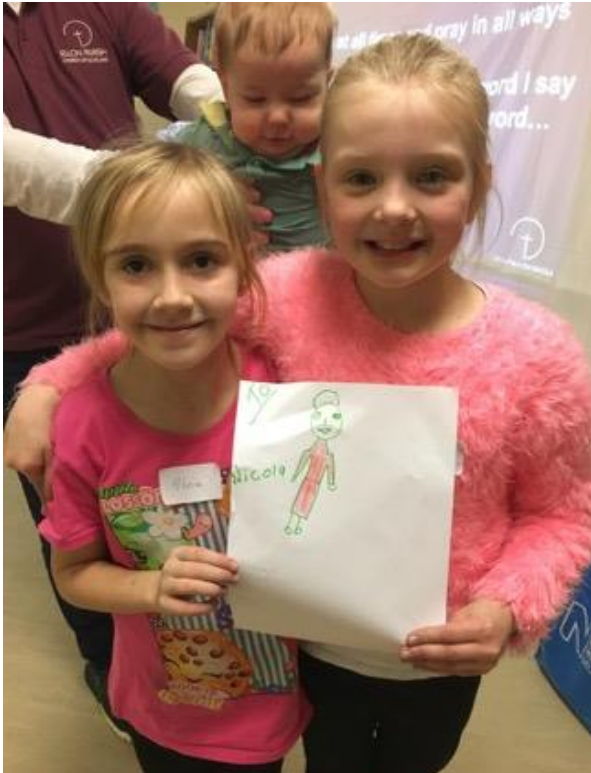
Q3: What's it like being a youth helper? What do you do?

Being a youth helper can mean a few things but mainly you are there to be the kids friends and to help keep the adults sane.

Q4: You live 162miles away, why do you give up time in your school holidays to help at Ellon parish church activity days & Kirk Fest?

Everybody is so welcoming it feels like a home away from home and it feels more like a present than giving up my holidays

Q5: What's your favourite thing about Guardians of Ancora clubs?
I really enjoy seeing the exceptional quality of the actors and how amazing the drama is. It is also really nice to see the kids who are scared or worried at first throw all that out the



window as soon as Al (Alastair) picks up a guitar.
(The reader should note Rory is usually in the drama 😊)

Q6: Finally, every 'hot seat' finishes with this question, what's your three favourite things about God?
(1) How much he loves everybody and how he will always forgive you as long as you ask
(2) How he made the world so beautiful and amazing
(3) All of the amazing, kind and hard working people he has made (especially Jamesy)

For information on how to get involved in this fantastic part of our ministry, how to support, what to pray for please contact Nicola 07711223100 or nbruce@churchofscotland.org.uk



WHAT KIND OF COMMUNITY DO WE WANT TO BE?

Peter Cross, Parish Assistant for Ministries gives an update on Pastoral Care in Ellon Parish Church.



That is the question we need to ask ourselves *first* when we are talking about pastoral care in the church. At the Kirk Session Conference in the autumn the decision was made to revamp the structure of how we carry out pastoral care for those on our membership roll. This was a big decision made thoughtfully and prayerfully and we're excited about where we're going to get to with that change in coming months.

But my first question is still where we have to start. There are many practical things to consider; all the *how's* and *what's* and *when's* that come with



organizational changes. But we are starting with a bigger, and more important, question. *What kind of community do we want to be?* The question, you'll notice, isn't *Do you want to change the district model?*

**We want to be
the kind of
community that
cares for each
other well.**

That was a secondary consideration. We started with *us* and *our* vision. We started by thinking about how to be faithful to our calling as Christians and, more appropriately, a Christian community in the way we carry out pastoral care. How can we best care for each other? How can we make sure that the needs of the people in this church don't get overlooked in the busyness of church life and meetings and planning committees and *getting-things-done*?

That's where we started. We want to be the kind of community that cares for each other well. And how can we do that? That's when we get into the practical bits.

One of those practical things is the new Pastoral Care Coordination group that meets regularly to make sure that pastoral concerns are handled confidentially and in an organised way. This small team makes sure that Alastair, myself, or a relevant member of the larger Pastoral Care Team or Eldership is notified about pastoral concerns so that they are being handled appropriately and confidentially. We want to know what's going on so we can care for you.

If you would like to let us know about pastoral concerns the best way is to email pastoralcare.epc@gmail.com or, if you aren't able to email, speak to Edith in the office. That way the people who *need* to know about the concerns in our community do know about them and are able to act appropriately to arrange a visit, a call, a card or whatever the situation might call for!



MUSIC – AN INCREDIBLE GIFT FROM GOD!

Rachel Burns, Ellon Parish Church Director of Music speaks about music in the life of the Church.



I'm both delighted and daunted to have started as the new Director of Music!

Richie and I have been so welcomed at EPC since we moved to Ellon over eighteen months ago now, having just got married and we are really enjoying being here. Before we got married and I then moved up to Scotland, I'd spent a couple of years working for a church in Wigan, and before that a church in London for eight years, as well as a year at a church in Northern Ireland, in a number of different roles. One of the main roles was to develop

projects that helped the church be outward looking and mission focussed, but all the while I was involved in developing and leading the music and absolutely loving it. It is therefore an absolute privilege and honour to have now taken on the role of Director of Music at EPC, following Alison's retirement. It is so clear that she has done an absolutely amazing job and how well loved she is by us all. I know she will be greatly missed!

Music is something that regularly blows my mind. I'm amazed at this incredible gift from God to us, and

the way he has designed it to move, stir and shake us so powerfully. For me that use of this gift as part of corporate worship is an important tool for the life of any church community, whether used for praise, celebration, reflection, adoration, thanksgiving, lament or to tell the story of the Gospel. Songs can enable our hearts to meet with God's heart, as it softens us and inspires us, and can help deepen our faith, giving us language to express ourselves, but also somehow expresses something deeper than words.

There are barriers sometimes of course!

One is that if we don't feel very confident about singing it can be hard to relax and enjoy doing it, especially when you think others can hear you. I feel so cross that so many people, especially in childhood, have been told they can't sing! The Bible tells us to make a joyful noise, not necessarily a tuneful one! So let's be free to let our hearts cry out in praise to God without worrying about the notes and what others think. It's possible to have perfect tuning but a disengaged heart, which is definitely not what we are wanting....

Another barrier in our worship as a community is our preferences for certain musical styles, and this has been an ongoing 'discussion'(!) for

hundreds and hundreds of years - organs or guitars and drums, hymns or contemporary songs, loud or quiet, amplified or acoustic, a capella or accompanied, traditional or contemporary etc etc. Let's not be tempted to get too distracted by that, because all music can be used to praise God, and our heart attitude towards God and others is key in all of this. And also, when we sing as a community, I think give and take is required. I've sometimes asked myself the question 'what is a bigger act of love and sacrifice, to sing your heart out to your favourite song, or to sing your heart out to a tune you don't really like, but is someone else's favourite?'

We are a busy and active church, and that is a wonderful thing in so many ways - it's all part of worship as a 'whole life thing'. Maybe a challenge for us is to make sure that before we get busy we are taking time to rest, reflect, praise, pray, read the Bible and be with God. Music is just one of the tools we can use to help us do this. And from that place we can be propelled into action.

It's so easy to just stand up and sing through the hymns (and indeed the whole service) on a Sunday week by week without remembering why we do it, and it's somehow even possible to sing the words but with our minds completely elsewhere (and believe



gather, and God is present in the midst of us.

So let's not miss out by just going through the motions week by week, but instead keep seizing our opportunity (see what I did there?) to grow in meaningful faith, community and witness. I'm so excited to see what God will do in us and then through us as we keep doing this and as we continue on our journey of growth in depth of faith and love for God and therefore others.

If you are interested in the choir or any other aspect of the music in Ellon Parish Church, please get in touch with Rachel Burns either in person or email:

directorofmusic.epc@gmail.com

me this can be true even if you're at the front playing an instrument too). Of course, at times, there might be really difficult things going on that are affecting us, but God knows all of this; nothing is hidden from him and we can bring it all to him. So maybe before we even start we can think to consciously bring to him all that we are carrying- struggles, doubts, hurt, weariness, joy, gratitude and everything else- and remember that the God we sing to and about is actually present with us. Not only that, but he is for us, and is closer and even more real than we probably realise, and able to transform our lives. We join in with the worship of heaven when we



There's been a choir in Ellon Parish Church for at least 50 years and are involved in helping lead worship most weeks in Ellon Parish Church.

Have performed several special Christmas pieces including *The Living Creche*, *Welcome To Our World & Hosanna Rock!* In 2016 & 2017 the choir held special Coffee and Carols Evenings.



Performed with the Ythan Fiddlers & Aberdeen Gaelic Choir.

Time for Jesus by Paul Day. Performed in Ellon with the London Mission Choir. Performed in Fyvie, Stonehaven & Elgin Town Hall.



The Ellon Parish Church Choir is led by Rachel Burns (Director of Music) and they practise on a Thursday evening at 7:30pm in Ellon Parish Church (Wee Chapel).

New members are always welcome. Please contact Rachel on directorofmusic.epc@gmail.com if you're interested.



4:30 SERVICE



Sunday 19 May | 4:30pm
Ellon Parish Church

Intergenerational
W o r s h i p



WHAT IS COMMUNION?

Ellon Parish Church is a charity registered in Scotland No.008819

hymns | worship songs | active reflection | prayer | bible
you choose: talk, discussion or arts & crafts

Light dinner afterwards



ELLON PARISH
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

COFFEE AND CRAFT

2nd Thursday of the Month | 2pm – 3:30pm

Coffee and craft takes place in the Wee Chapel once a month on a Thursday at 2pm. it's an opportunity to get together to share what's been happening in the week and to do some craft work together. It's open to anyone who happens to like crafting projects whether they are young or just young at heart.

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COFFEE AND CHAT

Last Friday of the Month | 2pm – 3:30pm

Coffee and chat takes place in the Gathering Area at the back of the Ellon Parish Church building once a month on a Friday at 2pm. It's open to anyone who is in need of a bit of company and a cuppa.

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COMMUNI-TEAS

Every Second Wednesday | 1:30pm – 3pm

Coffee, Tea, and home bakes in Ellon Parish Church every second Wednesday. It is free for all, and is a place where people of any age can come together. Whether it is to have some company during the week, or if you want to grab a coffee with old or new friends.



Nearly New Sale

This Year's dates until the June Summer Sale are:

13th April

11th May

8th June SUMMER SALE

Contact the Kirk Centre for More Information

CARDBOARD CAFÉ

It's really important we are able to provide a good service for the parents / carers / toddlers and babies who come to Cardboard Café. At the moment we're a bit short staffed. You don't have to be a regular at church, just be willing to help.

HELPERS NEEDED:

One of the teams is a little short staffed at the moment. If you think you could help once every 4 weeks then please let Edith in the Kirk Centre Office know and she can put you in touch with the team leader.

WALKING GROUP

Our weekly walks are starting again on Wednesday 3rd April, 6.30pm at the Kirk Centre (weather permitting). For more information please telephone Catherine Burnett on 01358 720524.

RAG BAGS

Please continue to bag up any old clothing, shoes and handbags for recycling. The church receives 40p per kilo for these.

We no longer collect household linens but if you have good quality linens then please offer them to the Nearly New Sales Team

ELLON PARISH CHURCH DRAMA GROUP OPEN EVENING

The EPC Drama Group are holding an Open Evening on **Wednesday 24th April at 7.30pm** in the Kirk Centre to discuss this year's pantomime Peter Pan which takes place in December.

Anyone wishing to take part onstage, backstage or with props, lighting or costumes please come along to meet the cast and crew and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat.

Anyone over 18 y.o. welcome.

THE BRIDGE MAGAZINE

If you'd like to contribute to the Bridge Magazine we'd love to hear from you. We're looking for people to write articles about faith and books and what's going on in the church community as well as in Ellon Parish. Contact Edith in the Kirk Centre Office, the Bridge Magazine Editor on epc.thebridge@gmail.com or Rev Alastair.

We are always looking for articles of interest to include in The Bridge Magazine. If you have anything you'd like to contribute to The Bridge that is loosely church or community related then please let us know.

The closing date for submissions for the April/May edition will be Wednesday 1st May 2019.

FAIR TRADE

Ann Gammack, Chair of Ellon Parish Church Fair Trade Group, gives us a summary of their activities.



FAIRTRADE

Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world, by requiring companies to pay sustainable prices. Fairtrade addresses the injustices of conventional trade, which traditionally discriminates against the poorest, weakest producers.

With Fairtrade you have the power to change the world every day and with simple shopping choices you can get farmers a better deal, and that means they can make their own decisions.

As you should be aware Ellon Parish Church is totally committed to the use of all Fair Trade goods within the Kirk Centre, Church and Kirk Centre Coffee Shop and all other

events where these goods can be utilised including the Fair Trade Stall which is to be found on the second Sunday of each month in the Church and now on a Friday morning of that same weekend in the Kirk Centre. Please note that other goods and gifts can be purchased as Fair Trade itself covers a wide range of choice. In 2018 Fair Trade Team in Ellon were able to send £2000 to Traidcraft Exchange which represents Fair Trade in the UK for distribution to the appropriate people. This money came about from all the support that was given during the fundraising activities and donations in 2018.

This year Fair Trade had its 40th birthday and on Sunday 10th March we in EPC celebrated by having balloons etc to enjoy this momentous occasion. To promote "Fair Trade Fortnight" this year, we as a team decided to concentrate our efforts on running a drawing competition for young people and a couple of competitions which you will find in the Kirk Centre Coffee Shop and the Church. You will find those drawings posted on the back wall of the church for you to view.

We continue to support Fair Trade so please keep a look out for us during all upcoming events in Ellon where you should see our stall.

Ann Gammack

1ST ELLON GIRLS BRIGADE FAMILY QUIZ

Calaidh Reid gives an update on the Girls Brigade quiz



families as possible, and we were lucky enough to have 23 teams attend. The night was Quiz Mastered by Mary Paterson, who also created the quiz rounds which were suitable for all ages.

One of our mums made some tablet, and some sweetie cones to sell, and we also held a raffle. Thank you to everyone who brought along raffle prizes and to everyone who purchased tickets.

On Friday 8th February, 1st Ellon Girls' Brigade held their first Family Quiz Night, to raise funds for the week to week running of the company, and also to help raise funds for Ellon First Responders.

Over the course of this session all of the girls have been researching "People Who Help Us", as part of their badge work and have been lucky enough to visit Ellon Fire Station and have Ellon First Responders in to show some basic first aid and CPR skills.

We chose to raise money for the First Responders because they receive no support or funding from the government, and are purely reliant on fundraising and donations. The money they raise and receive goes towards paying for fuel and insurance for their car, purchasing uniforms for the volunteers, and restocking vital supplies such as oxygen and other medical equipment.

We decided to have a Family Night so that we could involve as many of the girls and their

At a final count, after some additional donations, we raised just shy of £900, an absolutely amazing total and on Friday 8th of March we handed over a cheque to Ellon First Responders for £450. The remainder of the funds raised goes towards simple expenses such as purchasing badges to award to the girls at the end of the session, having trophies replaced and engraved, purchasing craft material for the year, and making sure the girls have a wee treat at Christmas time too, including their trip to Ellon Parish Church Panto.

It is hoped that this will become an annual event, and hope you will all join us again next year.

Calaidh Reid
Captain

Tel: 01358 742152
07557440429

Email: ellongirlsbrigade@gmail.com



Illuminate



Games | chat | explore the Bible
fun | friendship | food

Thursdays | 6:15pm - 7:15pm
P6 - S2 | Kirk Centre



ELLON PARISH
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

For more info email info@ellonparishchurchcouk
or phone 725690 | all leaders / helpers are PVG
checked

Ellon Parish Church is a charity registered in Scotland No.006819



STUFF FROM THE SESSION

Bill and Rosemary Biddie report on the Ellon Parish Church Kirk Session held to discuss the future of pastoral care in our community.

You'll maybe remember that the last 'Stuff from Session' focused on the Elders' Conference held at the beginning of December last year, so I thought that it would be a good idea to bring you up-to-date first of all on how the work begun there on Pastoral Care is progressing.

One of the main points that came from the conference is that, as a church community, we seem to be really quite talented at creating almost accidental communities of care. By this, I mean the way that people come together to offer support to one another just because the opportunity arises to do so. These communities are almost organic in nature (like Topsy, they've 'just growed') and the positive relationships among their members have done the same so that there is always someone there with a listening ear or a fine piece to cheer you up or an offer of a lift to an appointment or

just a bosie when the need arises. The Cardboard Café teams, the choir and band, the Nearly New team, the Girls' and Boys' Brigades officers, Session and so many groups within the church are examples of those sorts of communities.

And they are all grand; but what came out of the conference was a realisation that, on top of that, we also need to be intentional in our approach to Pastoral care and to be attempting, at least, to cast our nets far wider. To that end, two new groups have been set up. The first was the Pastoral Care Coordination Team (PCCT) which has Alison Young as the Pastoral Care Coordinator. Fancy titles, you're maybe thinking, but the aim is simple – whenever Alison (as PCC) hears of anyone within the parish who may be in need of help that we feel we can offer, she gets in touch with the appropriate person and lets them

know who needs help and what they need. This could be practical help such as a couple of deliveries of groceries from the Basics Barn or a visit to someone feeling down or a bit of support for new parents with, perhaps, no relatives living locally. This information is then passed on to the PCCT where further suggestions might be made about how we can help, support or encourage those in need.

I'm sure that you can see the intentionality in all of that but, without even being a member of the Pastoral Care team, you could be playing a part in pastoral care too. A special email address has been set up - pastoralcare@epc.gmail.com - and anyone can get in touch with Alison via that address to either seek pastoral care for themselves or to suggest others who might be in need of a boost, although, of course, you still have the option of talking to Edith in the office if that is handier for you. All communication will be dealt with confidentially.

A second, time limited, team has also been set up; this time with the title of Pastoral Care Development Team. This team has the brief of looking at pastoral care in wider terms and information on the work it is doing will be coming to you soon.

So, what else has Session been up to? Meetings have been held in January and March in both of which reports were received from the various teams.

This is the sort of 'bread and butter' stuff of Session and, of course, is not to be disparaged, but probably the more interesting items on the agenda of any Session meeting are those which come under the title of 'Discussion.'

In January, the discussion topic was 'Delegation of Powers.' This gave Session the opportunity to consider which 'powers' it has and which of those might be delegated to the teams so that Session meetings can be less taken up with the 'bread and butter' stuff and more concerned with faith, discipleship and generally how we go about the reason for our existence – telling the world about Jesus Christ through our words and actions. On the other side of this coin is the added bonus of teams which, better aware of what they can and cannot do without having to consult Session, can more quickly get on with the tasks in hand.

More recently, the March discussion topic was prayer. Session broke into smaller groups and Elders talked frankly about when they prayed, whether they felt they had ever had a prayer answered, what made prayer difficult, how they felt if they were asked to pray when visiting a member of the congregation, and how we could develop prayer as a church. This latter question has already led to there being a quiet time for reflection and prayer at the end of the service after the blessing. It's good in these discussion times that everyone feels that they can

say as much or as little as they like and that they can also be as honest as possible and not feel judged – that's not in the nature of Session and is part of what makes it representative of one of those organic communities of care of which I wrote earlier. My 'share' was that it sometimes takes me by surprise how angry my prayers are; when I perceive an injustice that needs righted, when I feel badly done by myself, when I feel that someone I care for needs help then a ranting prayer is one that comes far more readily to my lips than I would really like to admit. But it's also at the close of those prayers that I more often feel that I have been listened to and answered. And again, to be honest, it's the listening part of prayer that I find hardest.

At the end of the discussion, Alastair challenged each of us Elders to pray for five friends regularly until the next

Session meeting. He also handed out sheets which gave us hints and tips on how to remember to pray for these five friends (post-it notes on the fridge door, names written on pebbles on your bedside table, setting an alert on your phone) and prayers which we might use.

This is the one I've picked:

Loving Lord,

I pray that you will lead ... to you.

Thank you that you love them. I pray that you will break into their lives and show them your love, grace and peace, for your glory. Amen.

Give it a try. Go on – you know you want to.

Best regards,
Mary P



1st & 3rd sunday of the month 7pm ellon parish church
contemporary worship discussion teaching video refreshments throughout

COMMUNI-TEAS



Ellon Parish Church is part of an exciting new venture called Communi-Teas. It happens every second Wednesday at Ellon Parish Church, from 1.30 - 3pm. It is open for people of all ages and is supported by volunteers from: Ellon Parish Church, Ellon Rotary, Ellon Community Learning and Development Team and Ellon Academy.

The main aim of this cafe is to provide a social space where people of all ages in our community can meet for a cup of tea and a chat. We hope to offer projects to help such as using social media or downloading free music from any decade or linking people who might feel lonely or isolated for any reason with groups and activities in the area.

This is a great opportunity to meet new people, catch up with friends, or just grab some fantastic coffee or tea with other

people in the community. Communi-Teas is a space for everyone. It's part of Ellon Parish Church's mission to live Meaningful Faith, Meaningful Community and Meaningful Witness.

The dates for the next few Communi-Teas are:

27th March
10th April
24th April
8th May
22nd May

If you or anyone you know is interested, please come along or get in touch. We can provide free transport to anyone not able to get in to Ellon. Please contact Peter Cross at:
pcross@churchofscotland.org.uk or by phone at 01358 723787 to organise.

POINT TO PONDER

Alison Young, *former Director of Music, reflects on her time leading the musical life of Ellon Parish Church.*



So ... it is with some regret and sadness that I, after nearly 28 and a half years in the post of Director of Music at Ellon Parish Church, pack away my organ shoes, hang up my baton and hand over the reins to my very able and talented successor, Rachel Burns.

I have been asked to tell you a bit about what it has been like for me in that role over all these years and I can tell you in one word – busy!

The role has developed a lot since I started in September 1990 when Rev Matthew Rodger asked me to take up the post when Mrs Mary Hunter retired. Mary had served for 20 years as organist and choir mistress and from

where I was standing at that point 20 years seemed like a very, very long time. I can't believe all that time – and more - has passed.

When I first agreed to take up the post it was as organist and choir mistress. This meant playing every Sunday at morning and evening worship, playing for funerals and weddings and leading the choir. I think one of the most important things that helped me to fulfil that role both then and over all the years has been the support of Ian and my children. If they had not been as supportive (and indeed as encouraging) I don't think I could have served for so long. Our family routine had to revolve round me working on a Sunday and it did curtail some activities

that other families may take for granted. For example we couldn't just decide on a Thursday or Friday night to head away for the weekend or even go off for the day on a Sunday if the weather was lovely. These trips and outings had to be planned well ahead so that cover was in place. However, Ellon Parish Church was both good for me and to me. It was good to me because the job allowed me to be at home with my three children particularly when Ian's job changed and he needed to be away from home quite often.

It was good for me because it has given me the opportunity to grow in my faith through music and has helped me praise and glorify God through many different types of music. I have worked with many minsters and worship leaders from Matthew Rodger at the beginning right through to our present minister Alastair. They have all been different in the way they have done things, but have all been supportive and encouraging of me in my role. We have always worked together when preparing for worship and I hope that that is evident during our services. For the past 10 years I have sat on the Ministry Team which has been a huge honour and privilege and I miss meeting my colleagues on a regular basis now that I have retired.

As I said earlier the role has developed over the years and one of the first things we did was to start a wee church band. It has always been known as "The Band" and has had any number of

members from 4 or 5 right up to nearly 20 at one point. Instruments have been many and varied – flutes, recorders, clarinets, saxophones, bassoon, violin, viola, cello, double bass, electric bass, guitars, French horn, trumpets, trombone, drums – almost a full orchestra if we'd had them all at the same time! The Band at first played at our monthly family service, but has since played regularly at many services throughout the year and at various concerts too.

I really enjoyed leading the choir. The choir is a very loyal hard working group of folk who have served the church for many years helping to lead worship most Sundays. We have had many happy hours making music together and some very sad times too when we have lost members – always a difficult thing when you work closely together week after week. As well as weekly worship the choir had many highlights during my 28+ years. Sing Good News is one that many of us will never forget. We first performed this along with the Young Women's Group to celebrate their 10th anniversary at which we had 70 singers in the choir. The Band, of course, played and we had a children's chorus too. It was such good fun and the choir still enjoys singing some of the songs from that work. We repeated Sing Good News a few years later going on tour to Kintore Church and Fetteresso Church in Stonehaven.

A few years ago, through a couple from the Baptist Church, we were invited to join the Mission Choir from London in a

production of Time for Jesus, an Easter Musical by Paul Day. We gathered some singer from the other churches and the Scottish contingent practised the musical for a few weeks prior to the arrival of the Mission Choir. What great fun we had performing that. Both choirs got on really well and the sound we made was wonderful. It was semi dramatized too so thumbs up to everyone for being willing to have a go (it wasn't in the small print!) particularly the men who had to lie down to sing at one point! Time for Jesus went on tour too. We took it to Fyvie, Fetteresso again hitting the highlights in Elgin Town Hall.

We have performed at many different church events and socials and have gone out and about to care homes etc to entertain there. We have featured on a few televised Sunday services. We have taken part in Presbytery Advent events a couple of times and joined with St Mary's choir for a beautiful Tenebrae service on Good Friday some years back. We have invited members of the congregation to join us for some special events eg. Sing Good News, Time for Jesus, Hosanna Rock and some Christmas Concerts too.

From being organist/choir mistress I became Musical Director until in 2009 I became Director of Music. The big difference was that we invited some other musicians to be on a rota to play at morning worship. This has been good for Ellon Parish Church because it has allowed other people to use their talents and to share them with the

congregation and beyond. I give thanks to them all for their service and support over the years.

The role of Director of Music now means that he/she is responsible for all the music in Ellon Parish Church which includes ensuring that there is a musician available for any and all services. These include Sunday worship (morning and evening), funerals, wedding, care home services, end of term school services and any other bits and pieces that may come their way. So as well as being a musical role it is an organisational one now too - quite a different role from how it was in 1990. It has been a brilliant 28 years and I thank everyone who I have worked with for making it such an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. I thank you, the congregation, for your love and support and for all the lovely comments and good wishes that have come my way since retiring.

I wish Rachel all the very best in all she does. Ellon Parish Church is truly blessed to have someone so talented in many areas taking on this role of Director of Music and I thank God for bringing her to us exactly when we needed her. I pray that she and her husband, Richie, will feel as blessed serving us.

God be with you all
Alison



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CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

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ELLON PARISH
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basics
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most**

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now are:

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- Toiletries

...and any non-perishable food items!

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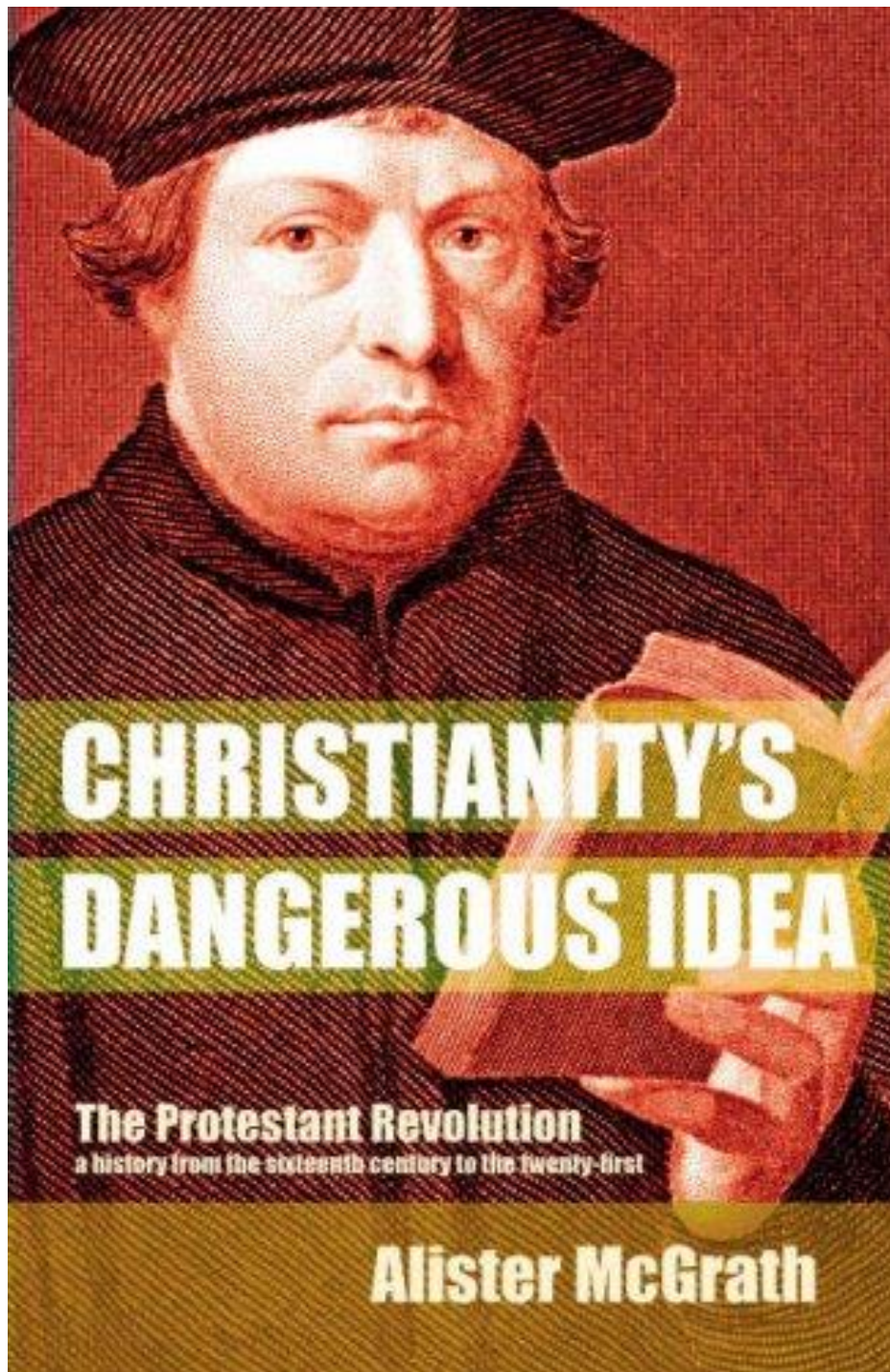
ellonparishchurch.co.uk,

email: cfegan@churchofscotland.org.uk, or text 07938567044

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BOOK REVIEW: *CHRISTIANITY'S DANGEROUS IDEA* BY ALISTAIR MCGRATH
DAVID SMITH



its title is Martin Luther's conviction that all people should be free to interpret the scripture for themselves rather than being forced to accept the interpretations of the Church. Based on that principle, he sought reform of the church as it stood, rather than the creation of a separate entity, but the church hierarchy was so powerful and so strongly opposed to his ideas, that the only alternatives available to him were acquiescence or separation. He chose the latter, and the result was what we know as 'The Reformation'.

That said, why does McGrath choose to call Luther's views about

Alister McGrath's, 'Christianity's Dangerous Idea' is a fascinating account of the Protestant Reformation, from its inception in 1517, up to the present day. The 'Dangerous Idea' that gives the book

biblical interpretation a 'Dangerous Idea'? The answer to that question is apparent in the book's sub-title, namely 'The Protestant Revolution - a history from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first'. This reflects McGrath's opinion, that the changes

brought about by the Reformation were so deep-seated and profound that Revolution is a more appropriate term. He points out that the established church prior to the Reformation was not only a powerful religious organisation but also a major and seemingly permanent political force in Europe. This was changed drastically and permanently by the developments resulting from The Reformation.

It should be noted that Germany did not exist as a state in those times, but rather as a large number of separate states each with its own ruler, under the overall rule of an Emperor. After many disagreements and even a minor war Emperor, Charles V was forced to accept that the many minor rulers in his empire could choose whether their realm was to be Catholic or Protestant. Thus the power of the hitherto established church was weakened and with this weakening went a loss of political power that was never regained.

Another dangerous consequence of Luther's conviction was that, given the new-found freedom of interpretation, others were free to interpret the bible in their own way, and did so in ways that differed from Luther. This resulted in a

proliferation of developments, often in directions to which others were opposed. As McGrath puts it; these changes "proved to be uncontrollable, spawning developments that few could have envisaged or predicted". In the worst case, the rise of the Anabaptist movement resulted in a war that lasted off-and-on for thirty years.

The major changes resulting from this freedom of interpretation are covered in interesting detail by McGrath. Major topics covered include Calvinism, the Anabaptist Movement, the Church of England, Protestantism in America, Presbyterianism, Methodism and The Global expansion of Protestantism, but McGrath is of the view that further division will continue to feature within Protestantism. One of his final observations is that the Protestant Church is now moving in the direction of Pentecostalism.

A book review can provide only brief insights but, for anyone interested in the history of the Protestant church, in all its many forms, 'Christianity's Dangerous Idea' is to be recommended. My copy is available to anyone who wishes to read it, but on a strictly 'read-and-return' basis.

CARDBOARD CAFÉ GOES WILD

Pam Adam, Ellon Parish Church Children and Families Development Worker tells us about the upcoming Cardboard Café events.



After a very successful run last year we have decided to run Cardboard Café Goes Wild again this year from May - September. This will be on the first Friday of the month from 1.30 - 3pm. We meet at the obelisk in McDonalds wood. Cardboard Café is loosely based on the Scandi concept of an outdoor play group.

We go for a walk finding "treasures as we go along to use in our temporary nature art, we have a game then a snack and a story before heading back to our starting point. Last year we went looking for Ewoks and Gruffaloes we planted some spring bulbs in the community garden, made mud pies for the teddy bears picnic

and created a work of art out of a dead tree. We get dirty we get wet and we enjoy the outdoors.

If anyone is interested in "doing outdoors" with toddlers and pre-schoolers speak to me (Pam). I am especially looking for someone who knows

trees and plants to teach bush craft in a safe and fun way for the children and adults.

For further information contact:
p.adam@churchofscotland.org.uk

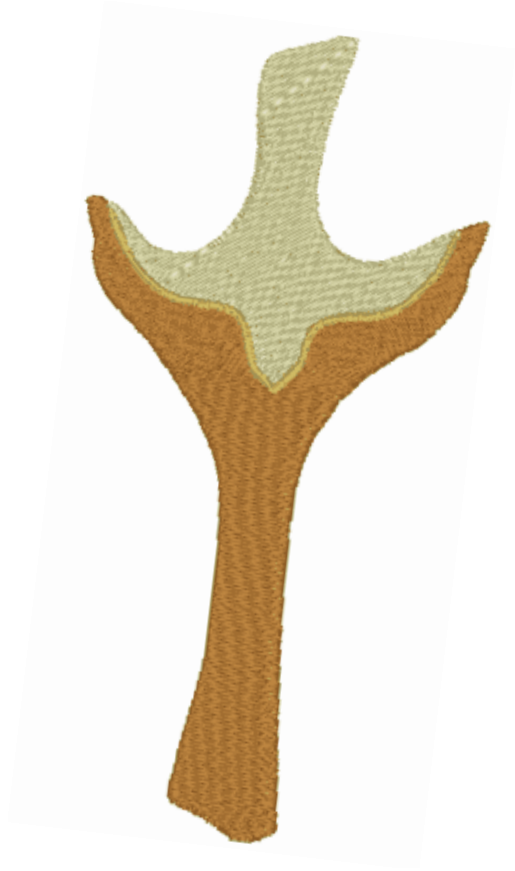


CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Jesus says: "I am the way and the truth and the life"

Funerals

Mary Power
Isabella (Ella) Milne
Rosemary (Rose) Webster
Alexa (Lexie) Alexander
Kathleen Smith Brown
George Alexander Paterson
Mary Jane Godsman
David (Davie) Forbes
Gary Scott
Stuart Norman Ritchie
Margaret (Greta) McIntosh
William (Bill) Anderson
Arthur Brown
Stuart Norman Ritchie
William (Bill) Davidson



FLOWER MINISTRY

Many thanks to the following for providing flowers in February and March to enhance our worship and to bring the comfort of the light of Christ to those in need of support, or with whom we are celebrating.

1st Ellon Girls' Brigade, Mrs M Stevenson, Mrs Y Kelly, Mrs E Davidson, Mrs A Fraser, Mrs D Davidson, Mrs E Gollan, Miss A Gammack, Mrs W Moir, Mrs A Milne, G Burgess & Son, Mrs P Morrison, Mrs D Reid, Mrs A Wyness, Mrs M MacDonald, Rev M Rodger, Mrs E Douglas, Flower Fund



CONTACT DETAILS

MINISTRY TEAM

Rev Alastair JS Bruce | Parish Minister | c/o The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | t. 01358 723787 | e. abruce@churchofscotland.org.uk | Days off: Saturday and Monday

Peter Cross | Parish Worker (Ministries) | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. pcross@churchofscotland.org.uk | t. 01358 725690 | Days Off: TBC

Pam Adam | Parish Worker (Children and Families Development) | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. padam@churchofscotland.org.uk | t. 01358 725690 | Working days for Ellon: Thursday, Friday & Sunday

Conor Fegan (Maternity Leave cover) | Parish Worker (Mission Development) | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. cfegan@churchofscotland.org.uk | t. 01358 725690 | Working days: Various

Rachel Burns | Director of Music | c/o The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. directorofmusic.epc@gmail.com | 01358 721196

KIRK CENTRE

Edith Walker | Administrator | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | info@ellonparishchurch.co.uk | t. 01358 725690 | Working hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 12noon & 12:30pm – 2:30pm



www.ellonparishchurch.co.uk

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Designed & Edited By Alastair Bruce, Conor Fegan and the Communications Team