



BARK

Dear all
Time is marching on for 2016 and here we are in March already.

My memory of March in the past is a time of preparation for the growing season, planting seeds and thinking about the creation in our gardens. Anticipation of what could be after surviving the winter season. Although for us in the south west of Scotland we are sceptical that we have seen the last of the rain and snow and the possibility of frost.

Surviving the winter has been an issue being the warmest on record, with floods, and the serious conditions for many this winter.

I heard a story about a man caught in a blizzard and desperately trying to walk his way towards some form of safety. His physical exhaustion overtook his ability to carry on walking and he found himself needing to rest. Becoming desperately cold he heard a whimper sound in the distance and literally crawled towards it to discover a puppy separated from its mother freezing in the cold in the same plight as the man. The man took action and started rubbing the puppy's fur to lift its temperature to help the dog stay alive throughout the night.

The next day a group of people out searching for the man found him and the dog alive. They discovered that the man, by working to keep the dog alive during the night had kept himself alive as well.

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When we serve others, we do a lot of good for them. More importantly we ourselves are changed. We benefit and we grow, we become more Christ like. There are times when we feel we are spiritually empty, exhausted and forget the potential of life around us.

So March should be a time of looking ahead and creatively imagining what could be in the promise of what creation and life we have now (even if we feel we have just survived it) and what it offers because of Christ.

In John 4:14 Christ said "Whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water I will give him will become in him a spring which will provide him with life-giving water and give him eternal life."

Steve...
 Your Parish Minister

Maundy Thursday (also known as Holy Thursday, Covenant Thursday, Great and Holy Thursday, Sheer Thursday, and Thursday of Mysteries) is the Christian holy day falling on the Thursday before Easter. It commemorates the Maundy (foot washing) and Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles as described in the gospels. The Royal Maundy is an ancient ceremony which has its origin in the commandment 'that ye love one another' (John 13:34).

Today's recipients of Royal Maundy, as many elderly men and women as there are years in the sovereign's age, are chosen because of the Christian service they have given to the Church and community. At the ceremony which takes place annually on Maundy Thursday, the sovereign hands to each recipient two small leather string purses. One, a red purse, contains - in ordinary coinage - money in lieu of food and clothing; the other, a white purse, contains silver Maundy coins consisting of the same number of pence as the years of the sovereign's age. According to the website of the Royal Mint the ceremony's during Queen Elizabeth II reign have taken place all over England with one in Ireland and two in Wales. The nearest ceremony to us took place in 1978 at Carlisle Cathedral.

Come and Join Us

Last year, Steve introduced the idea of holding a meal for everyone which took place in Castle Douglas Parish Church. There was a long table set up the length of the church which was filled with people enjoying this very happy occasion. It will be repeated again this year on Maundy Thursday and hopefully even more of our members and friends throughout the two parishes will join in.

Church Diary

March Sunday 20	Palm Sunday Kelton—with young people sharing	Sunday 27	Easter Sunday Communion Auchencairn 9.30 am
Monday 21	Castle Douglas Parish Church 7pm	April Tuesday 12	Guild—AGM 2pm
Tuesday 22	Castle Douglas Parish Church 7 pm	Wednesday 20	Session Meeting Kelton 7 pm
Wednesday 23	Castle Douglas Parish 7 pm	May Sunday 1	Communion Kelton 9.30 am
Thursday 24	Maundy Thursday Meal Cas tle Douglas Parish Church 7 pm	Tuesday 10	Guild—Outing - noon
Friday 25	Good Friday Service Auchencairn 7pm (Change of Venue)	Sunday 15	Pentecost
Saturday 26	Castle Douglas Parish Church Open 7 pm	June Thursday 9	Session Meeting Auchencairn 7 pm Board 7 pm
		tbc	

Bengairn Parish Duty Rota

Please arrive 20 minutes before the start of the service.
If you are unable to attend please arrange a substitute.

March 20 Kelton	A Campbell	A Ross	27 Auchencairn	W Kennedy	M Dunlop
April 03 Kelton	M Shanks	A Dunlop	10 Auchencairn	E McArthur	A Hyslop
17 Kelton	R Ramsay	K Smith	24 Auchencairn	J Jardine	J Walker
May 01 Kelton	J Hendry	N Smith	08 Auchencairn	F McCubbin	P Davis
15 Kelton	D Campbell	J Brown	22Auchencairn	D Henry	K Ross
29 Kelton	R Gladstone	R Bellamy			
June 05 Kelton	C Ashton	W Hean	12 Auchencairn	A Campbell	A Ross
19 Kelton	W Kennedy	M Dunlop	26 Auchencairn	M Shanks	A Dunlop

Services begin at 9.30 am

Parish Register

Funerals— We send our condolences to the families of

December
George Leeman

January
Sade Semple
Patricia Hunter

February
John Smith

March
Margaret Taylor

Bengairn Baptisms—We share in the joy of the families of

January
Jacob Stuart Hunter-Brown

February
Alexandra Elizabeth McIntosh McWilliam

Mothering Sunday or Mother's Day?

The day has long been associated with mothers and family. For centuries it was the custom for people to return home to their 'mother' church on Laetare Sunday - the middle of Lent. Those who did so were said to have gone 'a-mothering'.

The day often turned into a family reunion and a chance for children working away from home - often domestic servants - to spend time with their mothers.

Anna Jarvis founded the Mother's Day holiday in the United States. Many used to pick flowers from the verges along the way to leave in the church or hand to their mothers when they got home.

It was American social activist Anna Jarvis who campaigned for an official day to honour mothers in the US. She dedicated her life to lobbying for the day after swearing she would do so after her mother's death. However, she didn't like the commercialism which soon came in, saying "I wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit."

Meanwhile in Britain, vicar's daughter Constance Smith was inspired by a 1913 newspaper report of Jarvis' campaign and began a push for the day to be officially marked in England. Smith founded the Mothering Sunday Movement and even wrote a booklet "The Revival of Mothering Sunday" in 1920. Neither of these ladies became mother's themselves.

By 1938 Mothering Sunday had become a popular celebration with Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and various parishes across Britain marking the day. By the 1950s it was being celebrated throughout Britain and businesses realised the commercial opportunities.

Mothering Sunday was on March 6th in the UK this year - it always falls on the fourth Sunday of Lent.

When you say 'Mother's Day' you are actually referring to the American version. In the US it falls on Sunday May 8th, ever since President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed it so in 1914. The French celebrate the event on a different day altogether - 'Maman's' special day is reserved for the last Sunday in the month of May. Mother's Day in Spain is celebrated on December 8th. Spaniards pay tribute not only to their own mothers on this day, but also to the Virgin Mary. The day includes religious celebrations across the country.

Mother's Day traditions

Simnel cakes are associated with Mother's Day. During Lent, people did not eat sweet foods, rich foods or meat. However, the fast was lifted slightly on Mothering Sunday and many people prepared a Simnel cake to eat with their family on this day. Traditionally, Simnel cakes are decorated with 11 or 12 balls of marzipan, representing the 11 disciples and, sometimes, Jesus Christ.



THE WICKED BIBLE

In 1631, printers Robert Barker and Martin Lucas made a rather serious typographical mistake.

The royal printers in London, on their watch, printed with an error commandment number 7 in a reprint of the King James Bible omitting the word 'not'. Exodus 20:14.

You can buy yourself (for a mere \$90,500) a copy of what is now referred to variously as the Sinners' Bible, the Wicked Bible, or the Adulterous Bible.

The question remains as to whether this Bible was just printed carelessly, or whether it was sabotage. George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury at the time, complained that:

"I knew the time when great care was had about printing, the Bibles especially, good compositors and the best correctors were gotten being grave and learned men, the paper and the letter rare, and faire every way of the best, but now the paper is nought, the composers boys, and the correctors unlearned."

Barker and Lucas were fined £300 for their mistake (the equivalent of over £40,000 now), and most of the copies of the Bible inciting people to adultery were burned, making it a very rare a book to possess now.

A brief note from the Session Clerk

As this newsletter goes to print, we have just had our annual meeting. Mrs Brownie Wright intimated her desire to retire after about 30 years service to the congregational board. This is a record of service which few could hope to emulate, and while we wish her well in her retirement, we hope that she will be looking over our shoulders to make sure we do things correctly and carry on her good work.

We also have to record our appreciation to the various people who keep our congregation functioning. The treasurer, the property convenor and his committee, those who keep the buildings clean and prepare them for use, those who provide the tea and coffee after every service, and all who perform duties week by week.

Old congregational loyalties and habits are very deeply ingrained in all of us, and as we review another year it does no harm to remind ourselves that we go forward as the united Bengairn parishes.

We can also regard it as an achievement that we are keeping two Churches open for worship which is no small task at this time. Thank you all for your continued support and encouragement.
Peter Gladstone

Is your Newsletter reaching out to you?

What do you think of the Newsletter? It's meant to be your Newsletter and to include articles submitted by any or all of you- (although maybe not all in the one edition).

I have heard one or two comments from people who don't often join us in Church but have appreciated the Newsletter and found it interesting. It would be good to know which bits they like and then we can maybe include more of that sort of thing.

Hopefully too these people might decide to drop into the service one Sunday. Don't assume that today's services are just the same as they've always been. We have a new minister with new ideas and new ways of putting over the message. There is also a friendly cup of tea or coffee afterwards.

Do you find it easy to read the Newsletter? Not everyone may and if you are one of those who find it difficult or know of someone else who does, please let me know as we could do an audio version. Many of you will have access to a laptop or computer so if you would like to receive the Newsletter electronically this would also be an option. Just let me know. Contact details below.
Editor



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This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

At the moment I am preparing grant applications to fund a new build church on the island where I lived before moving to Dumfries and Galloway. This work involves spending many hours sat at a computer screen, typing, yet I still derive much pleasure from hand writing - I've numerous notebooks in which I enjoy writing this and that. In one I collect quotations that I've come across and feel are worth remembering. From time to time I flick through the pages of this book and spend a few moments thinking about some of the things I've written. This is what I came across today:

Today is a new day - You will get out of it just what you put into it.

Each day is a precious gift. Each new sunrise dawns like a blank canvas, we can paint the day grey, or we can choose the light, bright hues from the palette to complement our life. We can take pleasure in the small things; gain peace and serenity from the goodness that is around each one of us. A neighbour's smile, the snow on the Galloway hills, a friend's good deed, time spent flicking through a photo album or reading a letter, a walk along the shore or in the forest, cooking a pot of soup, a phone call to a friend, stroking a much loved pet - treasures all, that can be found throughout our day - little presents of joy waiting to be discovered.

That's why it's so important to unwrap the hours of each day with the anticipation of the wonders and joy to be found. Focus on the things that we can still do, not on the things that are gone from our life. A positive outlook as we approach each day will bring more strength to us than any other dimension of living. It may take some work to master this, and will certainly require more effort on those "not so good" days we all have - but it will be worth it.

How many of us get up in the morning feeling truly grateful for the day? Or do most of us wish we could turn the alarm clock off and keep sleeping. The truth is, when we're happy to wake up, greeting the morning with positive thoughts, and are grateful for the day, our life often changes in a good way. Each new day brings fresh opportunities and what we do today is important because we are exchanging a day of our life for it. Another quotation in my notebook is from Henry Moore and is a good thought to reflect on at the end of each day:

What has this day brought me, and what have I given it?

Each new day is a gift. The tomorrow talked about...is the yesterday to be. There are new opportunities and challenges with each sunrise. Maybe choices we made yesterday could have been better. Today gives us another chance to make better choices. Maybe we were irritable with others yesterday. Today we have the opportunity to be more patient. Maybe we didn't have time yesterday for those we care about. Today gives us the chance to better manage our time. Maybe we rushed through yesterday and left God out of it. Today we have the chance to take God with us. Maybe, today can be our best day ever. Maybe, tomorrow...when we look back on today...we can say, "Yesterday was a good day".

Nicky Smith

One Solitary Life

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant teacher.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never travelled, except in his infancy, more than two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompanies greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While he was still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through a mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, his seamless robe. When he was dead, he was taken down from the cross and laid in a borrowed grave through the courtesy of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today he is the centerpiece of the human race and the leader of all human progress. I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever were built, all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has this one solitary personality.

Unknown

Church Guild

Our 2016 meetings have given us much shared fellowship. We have welcomed new members and friends who have brought fresh impetus to our group.

January was "our home brewed" when members brought an article and spoke of the story behind it. We held a stone from the beach on Iona and shared special memories, marvelled at a journey, still ongoing, which started by helping out with a Brownie group; a pair of knitting needles and sewing box reminded us of the many garments produced by the light of a paraffin lamp.

A game yearned for as a Christmas gift when a young girl, through family love and research online, was found and made a present day Christmas very special. We heard from the memories of a member's mother in law, of how our Guild was formed 99 years ago. A calendar of special places in a family's life was a thoughtful and loving gift from a daughter. An old "Flit" gun to attack flies while milking outside in days past—no health issues then. A small wooden house complete with Mr and Mrs was a joiner made barometer which was a wedding gift many years ago - the man of the house has been busy with all the rain lately. We finished by listening to a tape of a Russian Choir who sang at Auchencairn some years ago.

In February we were back at Auchencairn listening not to a choir but to Stephen, our minister who told a crowded room of the episodes in his life which led to becoming a minister. Interspersed with appropriate choice of music with guitar accompaniment this gave us an insight to Stephen's calling.

At both these meetings Nicky led us in devotions. An integral part of our Guild we gain so much from these times of reflection.

As always we give you all a warm invitation to meet with us on the second Tuesday of each month.

World Day of Prayer

This was held in St Ninian's church Hall on Friday 4th of March. The service was written by the Christian women of Cuba and focused on children, giving opportunity to include younger people to participate in the service.

All present found it a moving experience. Members from St Ninian's, the Catholic Church, Castle Douglas parish church and Bengairn parishes took part.

In the run up to 4th of March three bible studies were held in Kelton church hall when members of each of the churches participated. The fourteen people involved found this a very worthwhile time spent together, making us more aware of the relevance of the service.

Margaret Shanks

Time Travel over 80 years

Recently, I found letters among papers belonging to my Mother. These were sent to her by my Grandparents when on their journey to and from New Zealand in 1936. They also recorded their thoughts in two diaries kept during their journey.



Berth on SS Mooltan

They left Scotland by train to Tilbury and embarked on the S.S. Mooltan ("The ship of a thousand romances") carrying about 600 passengers on 9 January. They were 25 members of a Farmers Union Group from Britain and were joined at Fremantle by several South Africans.

They describe their journey through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, to India, Tasmania and Australia to Sydney arriving on 20 February. Four days were spent touring around Sydney, before changing ship and sailing to New Zealand. There they spent about three weeks, moving about almost every day to a different town on both North and South islands. From New Zealand, they sailed to Vancouver in Canada, travelled across by train then sailed to Greenock arriving on 1 May.

In his letters and diary, Grandpa describes in detail all the ports visited, the areas seen on these stops and the hospitality given by Overseas League, Farmers Union members and Government officials. Their tour was noted by newspapers in the various countries (headline in the Brisbane Courier-Mail of 13 February - "British Farmers on Tour. National Union Party for New Zealand"). They visited dairy farms, sheep and cattle markets, saw apple and other fruit areas and describe the towns and their buildings. At the end of his diary he lists the miles travelled by ship, train and car which amount to an unbelievable number. (London to Sydney - 13000 miles; Sydney to Auckland - 1300 miles; Auckland to Vancouver 6500 miles; Montreal to Greenock - 3000 miles) (Train) UK 450; New Zealand 3200; Canada 3200 (Car) in New Zealand 2500).

Granny was more interested in the shopping and the people she met, asking folk with Scottish voices where they had come from originally. She also describes the pace of life on board ship, as the weather became warm the staff uniform changed from black to white, the games played on board and the regular Sunday services conducted by the captain. She tells of tea parties and banquets and other entertainments they were treated to in the various towns and countries.

The tempo of life was very different to that of today. My brother and his wife have just spent a month in New Zealand on holiday and they travelled by air, taking 23 hours to get there.

The Mystery Worshipper

Many of you will have heard of mystery shoppers who are paid to go into particular shops or department stores and report back on their experience with a view to the shop/store improving their services, but have you heard of The Mystery Worshipper?

When preparing a Newsletter I usually browse the internet for inspiration in case there is a space needing filled prior to publication. This month I came across a website called ShipofFools.com and there I found The Mystery Worshipper?

I read a couple of articles which were both amusing and thought provoking. The idea is that someone goes to a church which they have never been to before and answers a particular set of questions. Churches have been visited in various parts of the USA, Canada, UK, Ireland etc. etc. One heading I found was "Mystery Worshipper Sunday" - A Snapshot of 70 London Churches where 70 mystery worshippers had visited 70 London churches on the same date. If you have time and the facility you might like to read the results for yourself. Some of the reported "highlights" on this day included -

- A silence so profound you could hear your hair growing
- A yelping dog sits through a sermon 52 minutes long
- The 2.5 hour service where the preacher finally keels over
- Rumbled at a Puritan assembly and frogmarched to the beak
- After-service coffee? We were offered champagne!
- Backrow bother - four old ladies heckle minister

Here are the questions they were asked

- How full was the building?
- Did anyone welcome you personally?
- How would you describe the pre-service atmosphere?
- What were the exact opening words of the service?
- What books did the congregation use during the service?
- Did anything distract you?
- Was the worship stiff-upper-lip, happy clappy, or what
- Exactly how long was the sermon?
- On a scale of 1-10, how good was the preacher?
- In a nutshell, what was the sermon about?
- Which part of the service was like being in heaven?
- And which part was like being in... er... the other place?
- What happened when you hung around after the service looking lost?
- How would you describe the after-service coffee?
- How would you feel about making this church your regular (where 10 = ecstatic, 0 = terminal)?
- Did the service make you feel glad to be a Christian?
- What one thing will you remember about all this in seven days' time?



Although the articles I read were several years old, they are just as relevant now. Perhaps you would like to think of your answers to the questions the Mystery Worshippers were asked to consider. What impression do visitors to our churches take away with them? Should we be serving champagne instead of coffee?

Editor

Prayer used during the service on 6 March

God of compassion You sent Jesus to proclaim a time of mercy reaching out to those who had no voice, releasing those trapped by their own shame and welcoming those scorned by society.

Make me an ambassador of reconciliation.

Open my ears that I may speak your words of peace and forgiveness. Warm my heart that I may bring wholeness to the broken-hearted and dissolve the barriers of division.

Guide the work of your Church and renew me with the Spirit of your love. Help me and all people shape a world where all will have a place, where the flames of hatred are quenched, and were all can grow together as one.



Forgive, restore and strengthen me Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Easter Service at Kirkland of Gelston.

On Easter Sunday we will have been holding an open air service on the site of Gelston Church for 21 years. First suggested by the Rev Andrew Swan it has become part of our celebration of Easter. It is an informal gathering sharing in a short service the joy that Christ is risen-He has risen indeed. Do come and join us. There is a good hill for the children to roll their eggs. Those who came as toddlers still come, we hope that in the years ahead the tradition continues.

Soup and Sweet Lunch

Saturday 2 April
12 noon–2 pm

Castle Douglas Parish Church Hall
Cost £5.00

Please support us in this fund raising event in aid of the Bengairn Parishes



Oonagh's corner

Greetings to you all today from a dry and sunny but very cold Stranraer!

We are here to watch 2 of our daughters run in a Half Marathon race. That's running 13 miles without stopping; a real test of endurance and much farther than I could walk!

Chattering to some lovely folk today, I picked up some of the lingo.

What keeps them going when they hit, "the wall" (*running in-speak for exhaustion*); is their aim to beat their P.B. (*personal best time*)!

It made me think of those words of St. Paul about running the race marked out for us -- and the need to throw off everything that hinders us from keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.

As one who definitely feels past the stage of testing my physical endurance, it was with great gladness that I remembered that on our Christian journey we are encouraged to stop and rest; that there are "pools of quiet waters by" the side of our road; trees in bud and sunsets to admire; and a "table furnished" by a God who knows that our strength comes from Him alone.

But in both "races" it does seem that keeping going is key, not being distracted by things that are unimportant, knowing where we are going and why.

I suppose for both of us a changed life is, "the prize"; our two girls want to be svelte and fit, I want to be made new on the inside, a New Creation in the Lord.

Mind you being a stone lighter and fit enough to get up the Kippford hill would be lovely!

Perhaps this season of Lent is a time for me to re-think my whole life through; to get out a pair of walking shoes and enjoy the wonders of spring. We saw new born lambs on the way home, what a wonderful world surrounds us here!

Thank you as always for your kindness, help and support, it means a great deal.

Every good wish and blessing to you and the ones you love, in this season of God's amazing love to us.
Yours, Oonagh.

Items for the next newsletter should be given to the Editor **IN WRITING** at Church,
by e-mail to rosemarygladstone@gmail.com or by post
to Mrs R Gladstone, Lansdowne, 93A St Mary Street, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4EL by **Sunday 14 August 2016**
Contributors should give contact details in case of any queries.