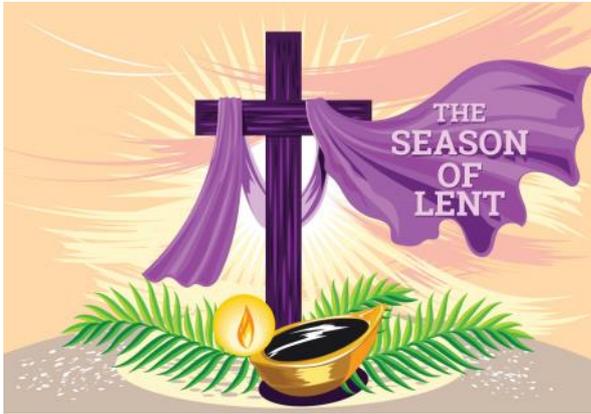


Achterarder Parish Church Newsletter

25th February 2023

Registered Charities SC001688



Musings from the Manse

It's Lent again, and some people still observe - more or less seriously - the tradition of giving things up. Often we choose to give up a "vice" which we'd like to control: maybe alcohol, Facebook or chocolate (I've never personally felt called to give up chocolate, but maybe I'm just not listening!)

This year I heard a different (and maybe better) approach: some children have committed themselves to give up a bad habit for Lent, like losing their temper or quarrelling with their siblings. What an excellent idea, and one we adults could be challenged to copy! My only question is: what happens on Easter Day? Celebrating the end of your Lent "fast" with a "feast" of a glass of wine or chocolate egg is one thing – it would be something else to "celebrate" with a raging family blowout as the pent-up frustrations of the last 6 weeks all get released at once!

I'm sure that won't happen, and I wish them well! At the very least, giving up things for Lent is a handy exercise in personal discipline. At best, it's a small but constant sacrifice to remind us that Jesus lived His life completely unselfishly, culminating in giving up His life for us. Sometimes we sacrifice things in order to grow.

Not to be perverse (who, me?!) I'm suggesting that as a congregation we shouldn't give up something for Lent, but take up something: the practice of daily prayer and Bible reading. Notes are available to help us read Mark's Gospel together, and those who wish can meet others to share their thoughts in DNA groups. Again, something we shouldn't stop after Easter! Having seen the benefits, we'll hopefully want to build it into the ongoing shape of Christian lives.

Finally, if we wanted to follow the children's example, here are some suggestions:

Fast from words that tear down; Feast on words that build up

Fast from anger; Feast on patience

Fast from worry; Feast on prayer

Fast from complaining; Feast on thanksgiving

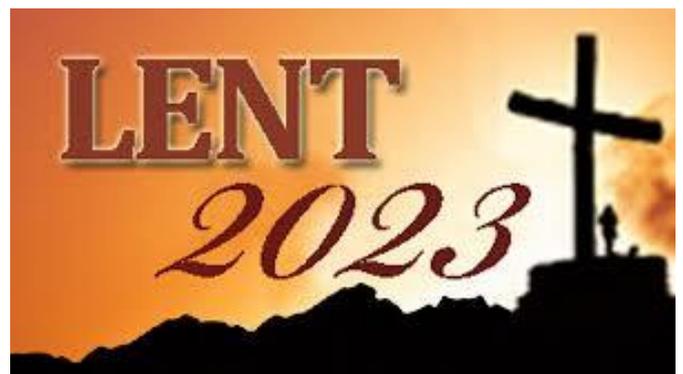
Fast from pressure; Feast on peace

Fast from lethargy; Feast on enthusiasm.

....and don't stop at Easter – it's just the start!!

Wishing God's blessing to you all

Lynn



CHURCH TEAMS

APC is run by 7 teams of volunteers - this month we have the.....

Centre Management Team (CMT)

The Vision Statement, above the serving hatch from the kitchen in the Centre reads:

A dynamic community hub where people of all ages are shown God's love by being welcomed, respected and supported towards the fullness of life that God intends.

And this is what we seek to do.

The Centre is used extensively by both Church and Community groups, but three examples will give a flavour.

- The Foodbank had its origins in our Community Support Project when Covid struck, intending to be a short term project – now in our third year. The community benefit is clear. But it is supported by a team of volunteers and contributions from across the community and beyond, including APC, other local churches, and groups such as Inner Wheel. Jackie, who leads the project, along with Ruth and Alison, sits on CMT.
- The Community Garden Project was set up two years ago, and continues to grow (of course!), and you can see it extending down to the gates. It provides fresh produce to the Foodbank, and to the wider community. But it also brings people together, mixing and developing friendship with church folk. And we have just been asked for one of the allotments by the school, to be involved in a community project, and to liaise with members of the community. It is led by Derek Johnston, who is one of the newer members of CMT.
- And Archway which is held every Monday, and led by Renee who is also a member of CMT, gives social contact over a lunch to those who perhaps live on their own, or are in one of the care homes. It also provides advice and support from PKC and NHS Tayside, and has become a valued connection in the community.

Also on our Team we have Lesley Buchan Donald, our Centre Administrator while Mandy is on maternity leave; Andrew our Youth Worker who brings a younger perspective; Kenny MacKay our Treasurer; Phil Brierley who heads up the FMG who oversee all property and Health & Safety matters; and of course Lynn as minister.

And if your DNA Group is wondering where your A for Action might lie – why not consider a couple of hours a week, on a weekly rota shared every few weeks with your other group members :

- to cover the reception desk, and be a friendly welcoming face
- to open up or lock up after one of the user groups
- to set up tables and chairs, or clear them away

Just speak to any one of us.

Murdo Macmillan CMT Convener

Auchterarder Parish Church

Auchterarder Community Church Centre

A dynamic community hub where people of all ages are shown God's love by being welcomed, respected and supported towards the fullness of life that God intends.

Community Activities - many stimulating adult education classes plus Men's Shed, Rugby Nippers and lots more!

Archway - weekly lunch club

The Blue Door Food Bank - in partnership with our community and other churches

Friday Evening Youth Club - 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Also, might this be the perfect venue for your event?
Large, Light Open Space - Smaller Rooms
Commercial Kitchen - Parking

admin@auchterarderparish.org
www.auchterarderparishchurch.com

Active Disciples - Praising God - Caring for People

Guild News - February



This month the Guild have continued with our soup lunches, and our meetings have all been well attended.



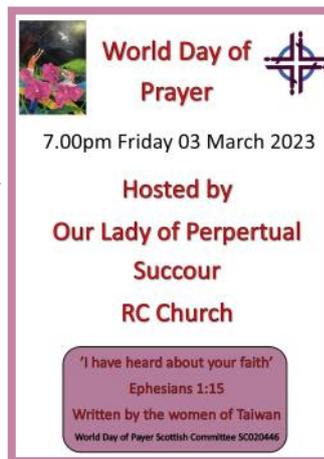
The speaker from Pioneers explained how one of our Guild projects, “Chocolate Heaven” began, and the progress already being made with making and marketing fair trade chocolate, while spreading the gospel in S.E. Asia. We were even tested on our knowledge of chocolate, i.e. - does it come from a bean, berry or seed etc, and the sales table which had been piled with delicious chocolate bars completely sold out!

The next meeting brought us nearer home, when 3 local ladies told us about a Perth Council Project, “Raise the Roof”, to promote historical local women who had been achievers.

They researched the life of Elizabeth Sanderson Haldane, of Cloan, who had many outstanding achievements, as a suffragist, author, higher educator, nurse, philosopher and first female Justice of the Peace. She also began the local library in 1920.

Members are reminded that March meetings return to 7.30pm, with the AGM being held on Thursday, 2nd March instead of 30th, due to the Induction of the new Rector of St Kessog’s that evening.

The World Day of Prayer is on Friday, 3rd March, services will be held in the 3 local Care Homes during the day, and at Our Lady’s church at 7pm, to which everyone is welcome.



“Whose we are and Whom we serve”

Spring DNA Groups

DNA Groups were pioneered in Auchterarder Church in Spring 2022 and are back by popular request! DNA groups (Discipleship, Nurture, Action) are tiny cells of 3-4 people, meeting for just 45 minutes per week at any time and place that suits them. They have two aims: to deepen our discipleship and fellowship within the church by reading the Bible and praying together; and to help us think creatively about how we can serve the church and the world.

Most people were a bit nervous at trying something new but over 50 brave souls gave it a go! Some elders approached people in their district, groups got together from the choir, Guild and other organisations, some people just grabbed a couple of friends, some came individually and a group was suggested for them. Everyone more than lived to tell the tale: at a feedback lunch at the Manse, over 30 people gathered to share stories of how the groups had gone. It was brilliant to hear how positive people had found it. “I’ve been in the church for years but now I feel I know people”. “I had never prayed with people before but it was fine.” Many struggled to find a meaningful “mission” focus in the short time, but some did and one group undertook gardening for a neighbour in need. The overwhelming consensus was that DNA groups are something we would like to do again.

So, the next lot will start this coming week, for 6 weeks until Easter. We’ll read together Mark’s Gospel – short and snappy! – in preparation for Easter and a great introduction to faith for anyone new. There’s still time if you want to be in a DNA group - contact Margaret Ross at magsross1711@gmail.com and she’ll sort you out. Whether you’ve done it before or you’re new, please try it – and why not invite a friend?



Messy Church



Our last Messy Church was at the beginning of February. Our theme this term is Bible superheroes and this month's superheroes were Daniel and his friends. They were all taken from their homes when young men but found favour in their new country. They faced some terrible challenges while staying faithful to God and these involved fiery furnaces and lions. Needless to say our crafts were made-up of activities with lots of flames and lots of noisy growling lions. We had a great turn out, with many familiar faces and some new ones – a great encouragement. It would still be good to have a few adults come along to check us out and join in with us – 'it's church, but not as you know it,' as they say! March's Messy Church will be very different, as Gordon Roy from Blackford Church is leading and the session is entitled 'Creative Clowning'!!!! Watch this space!



Please put in the diary;

Messy Church **Sunday 5th March** - Creative God' led by Gordon Roy and including lots of clowning activities!

Sandra - sandra.miller@live.co.uk , Shirley and Andrew

GIVING TO AUCHTERARDER PARISH CHURCH

As Christians we believe that everything we have is a gift from God. Giving back to God is part of our worship and discipleship, and one of the ways we show our thankfulness. All the church's ministry and mission depends on the generous gifts of our members and we are grateful to everyone who gives.

So, might you prayerfully consider how to make a regular offering to APC? Mainly there are three ways.

Our preferred method is for members to give via **standing order** (monthly, quarterly or annually) through your bank account. This makes giving part of your regular Christian commitment, and allows our finance team to budget accurately on predicted income. It's also easy for taxpayers to claim Gift Aid – an extra 25% of your gift. Standing order forms are available from the finance team.

Some people prefer to use **weekly freewill offering envelopes** to place on the plate at the door and these are available from the finance team. Cash can also be placed in the offering plate.

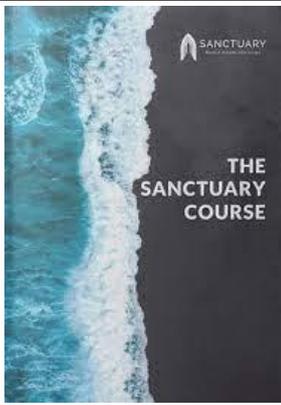
Finally, we are now able to accept **contactless donations** via the machines at the church door, the Church Centre and the coffee hatch.



Our Finance team would be delighted to hear from you - please email

Vicky Anderson, Gift Aid Convenor vickyanderson880@gmail.com or

Kenny Mackay, Treasurer kennyauchterarder@gmail.com



Feedback from the Sanctuary Course:

Were people interested?

When the Sanctuary Course was first discussed by the worship/discipleship committee, it was hoped that 6 or more people would be interested - 6 people really being the minimum number required. In the event, 25 people from the congregation completed the 8-week course. There are really 2 reasons we all wanted to take part. Firstly, to learn a bit more about the complex world of mental health, and secondly to be part of an open and welcoming mental health culture within the church.

How did people describe the course?

enlightening; introspective; resonates with real life and experience; relevant; enriching; thought-provoking; engaging; educational; uplifting; encouraging; very challenging

What did people get from the course?

- *Friendship and sharing real conversations;*
- *Better understanding of how other people tick;*
- *It's been great to talk about difficult things and hear others talk;*
- *Getting rid of the things that hold us back;*
- *It makes you think about the other people in church and what they're going through – how different we all are;*
- *Getting to know people really - not just the Sunday person you see in church;*
- *Intimacy in sharing and mutual trust;*
- *God cares about people that we can't cope with;*
- *Greater empathy with the vast range of mental health problems - both extreme and more every-day;*
- *Hope in God;*
- *Understanding that I'm not alone;*
- *We don't have to fix people and shouldn't try – it's ok to journey/accompany;*
- *One of the best courses so far;*
- *Not like anything else I have done;*
- *Relevant to everyday life*

What actually happens during the 8-week course?

The study, video and discussion material focus on the “psychological, social, and theological” aspects of mental health. Going into week 1 these terms sounded wordy and confusing, however by the end of week 8 they had greatly helped all of us to increase our knowledge and understanding of mental health.

Those of us that took part enjoyed tea, cakes, laughter, videos, discussion, art reflections, bible reflections and prayer reflections. Inevitable some weeks speak more to our personal experience and understanding than others, but they were never the same for all of us.

Where does the church go from here? Can we help to support people out with APC?

We're open to running the Sanctuary Course again within the Church if there is more interest. Please speak to Lynn if you were not able to take part in the recent Sanctuary Course and are still interested, or if you have any further thoughts or ideas regarding the course.

Ewan McLean-Foreman
Sanctuary Course Helper



APC Community Garden – February Update

Garden Planning

Our seeds for the new season have arrived and we will soon distribute them to our growing team to start them off in seed trays before transplanting them later in the year when the frosts have passed. Our growing plan includes peas, beans, onions, garlic, carrots, beetroot, leeks, cauliflower, broccoli, kale, pak choi, radish, lettuce, tomatoes, herbs and potatoes. If anyone would like to help grow our seeds at home for planting in the garden later, or raise them to maturity, then please get in touch.

Mini-allotments

Work is progressing on the garden access from the road with the unloading bay almost finished and an access path to the mini-allotments underway. We have 8 raised beds constructed to offer individuals, families or groups, where they can grow their own produce, with space for another 4 depending on demand. Several people have already expressed an interest but we still have space for a few more. If you know of anyone who would be interested in having a raised bed (2.5m x 1.2m) then they should email us with their details at the email below soon. We will be allocating the beds in the next few weeks 😊



Compost, Mulch & Manure

With the prospect of 12 new raised beds coming on stream we are looking out for sources of compost for the garden. If you have any old bags of compost, mulch or manure left over from last summer which you want to get rid of, get in touch. We can even come and collect. In fact if you are clearing anything out which can be used in the garden, let us know, it might be just what we need!

Volunteers

We are always looking for new volunteers to learn, share knowledge and help out, either doing the gardening, with maintenance or growing things for us at home. We would especially like a veg growing 'mentor' to give us advice throughout the year on when and what to plant to extend our harvest. If you know anyone that fits the bill, please get in touch.

Composting

We also have reusable food waste kitchen caddy's to give away. If you could collect your food waste and deposit in our compost bins (or yours) even better. The caddy's are free, just come and pick one up 😊.

Derek Johnston

07850 542107

communitygarden@auchterarderparish.org

Definition of JOY:

The faces of the ladies and gentlemen at Sheila Wilson's exercise class at APC on Wednesdays.



Thank you...

A big thank you to my church family for your love and support over the past few weeks.

Losing my dad in January was a big shock and it's been a difficult few weeks for me and my family.

I'm so grateful for the cards, messages, flowers, love, prayers and support from folks at APC. Thank you.

My dad for those who don't know was a minister, ordained in the Church of Scotland but was ministering at Dundee Congregational Church until his death last month. He preached his last sermon on 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, The Hope of the Resurrection. It's worth looking up and having a read of these verses but to quote dad, from the day before he died:

'Can there be a more inspiring hope, comforting prospect or reassuring promise that Jesus died and rose again, that He will return, bringing those who have already passed away and that they will be reunited with loved ones'.

These verses from Thessalonians and dad's last sermon bring much comfort and hope, which I hope they do to you too. Blessings, Michelle, x

Youth Update February

We have been busy these past few months, building relationships with the young people in Auchterarder. We were lucky to get the opportunity to join a group at Lendrick Muir outdoor activity centre for a free day of activities on some of their new activities and the high ropes course. This was a great day out, and a wonderful taster of what SU camp would be like. See attached picture for details about a camp in Easter that Andrew Kennedy will be going to.



Our Sunday evening group has continued to grow, we have been looking through the story of Daniel – discussing how we can hear from God and how we can trust him when times are difficult.

Our Friday Night Youth Club also continues to grow, we enjoyed a quiz night together in February and are looking at where we might go out for a trip in March.

The SU group in school has been well attended by senior pupils who are about to start sitting exams, so we have begun to look at drawing in a group of younger pupils. We have been exploring some of life's bigger questions.

Andrew Kennedy - Youth worker
Auchterarder Parish Church

Andrew.kennedy@auchterarderparish.org



Church lunch....

Our next Church lunch is on Sunday 26th March at Pitmeadow Farm, Dunning, PH2 0RA. It's a bring and share lunch. Everyone is welcome. Fiona and Ewan are opening their home for us and have space for everyone including families, neighbours, friends and all at APC. There will be opportunity to see the lambs if they have arrived, visit the playground or have a kick about in the field. We can arrange transport for those who don't have.



There will be a sign-up sheet available over the next few weeks at church. This will be beside the biscuits at the tea/coffee after the service. Signing-up will help us with numbers and also in planning, please let us know if you can bring something savoury or sweet. Pitmeadow has facilities to heat some food or something for a cold buffet would be lovely. Speak to Michelle Livingstone (michelle@weeshopanddeli.co.uk) or Fiona and Ewan McLean Foreman if you have any queries. We would love to see you on the 26th March, please come even if you have nothing to bring. It'll be a lovely afternoon of being together.

Future church lunch dates are:

- Sunday 14th May: lunch in the church hall
- Sunday 25th June: picnic in the park, if weather allows!



Craft Group/ Prayer Shawls

Thank you for your support over the past few months and donations of wool. On Sunday 22nd January, 30 prayer shawls and 5 blankets were blessed. After the service there were only 3 left! So the ladies are again knitting. We would welcome more knitters and our next meeting is at 10.30 on Tuesday 7th March in the Garden Room. The group are also thinking about making prayer bracelets and would welcome donations of beads.

So if you have any bracelets or necklaces that you no longer want..... Please hand them in or leave at the back of the Church or at the desk in the centre.



Thank you. Marjorie Paton

Cycling group



Small but perfectly formed group at Killiecrankie

This photo was taken on our February's cycle which was a new venture with a circular route from Dunkeld to Pitlochry and return (<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/31013920>).

In March we are still undecided as to our cycle on the 18th and may well be Dunkeld to Aberfeldy (30 miles and nice and flat) or a bigger adventure which will be the bridges (Forth Road Bridge/Kincardine circular (42 miles but pretty flat). We will decide in the next week or so.

Can I suggest that if you wish to come on the cycle you either use the WhatsApp group to tell us (please send on your phone number to my email address) or email me at s.mcchlery@gcu.ac.uk Stuart McChlery



APC Walking Group

Save the Date - Saturday 25th March 2023



The next Walking Group Outing is planned for Saturday 25th March (provisionally in the Scone area)

A walk leaflet will be circulated to the Walk Group distribution list closer to the event.

Please feel free to contact admin@auchterarderparish.org if you would like to be added to the list or look out for a leaflet at the back of the Church, on Facebook, on the Auchterarder Community Action Group electronic notice board and on the town notice boards.

This Group is open to all - there is no requirement to be a member of Auchterarder Parish Church to take part.

Future walks are planned on May 27th, July 29th, Sept 30th and Nov 25th
Hope to welcome you on a walk soon.

Friday 10th March

Keep this evening free and come along to the Church where THE HEART AND SOUL SWING BAND will be playing their joyful, foot tapping and stirring music for us. Entrance is free but they do ask for donations for the Church of Scotland's HIV/Aids Project.

Marjorie Paton on behalf of The Mission Team



MEN'S SHED - GUEST SPEAKER



On 21st February at the Men's Shed meeting they had a very interesting talk from a former prison officer. As a physical education instructor with a team of 6 instructors, he was not only responsible for improving the welfare of the inmates by providing regular exercise in the gym, circuits, weight lifting, football etc. the team were also responsible for controlling violent out breaks and riots.

By providing regular physical exercise the assaults on prison staff were reduced considerably and by learning how to deal with difficult situations, the team could deescalate potential problems.

Our thanks to member Ian Campbell for providing a very interesting speaker and a vote of thanks was given by John Boyd.

The attached photo shows some shedders being instructed on the proper use and maintenance of a band saw.



You are welcome to come along to our meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-4pm at Auchterarder Parish Church Community Centre. You will be made most welcome and have a chat over a cup of tea. Contact auchterardershed@gmail.com for details.

Blue Door Foodbank

Opening Hours

Tuesday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Friday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Auchterarder Parish Church

24 High Street, Auchterarder



For any further information, please contact us on: info@bluedoorfoodbank.org or 01764 660965

Blue Door Foodbank is always very grateful for food donations which can be dropped off at the local Co-op.

Social Media Reminders

Remember, you can always keep in touch online with APC and all its goings on in a variety of ways!



The website address is: auchterarderparish.org



APC twitter link is: @apcchat



Messy Church twitter link is: @ApcMessy

Our Facebook pages is: @auchterarderparish

From the editor ...

I do hope you enjoy the newsletters which are currently being produced on the last Saturday of the month. Next issue will be 28th March 2023.



If you have any interesting stories, celebrations, photos etc you would like me to publish then please send to me, whenever you have them, and I will keep for the next edition.

If you are reading this newsletter as a paper copy and would like me to send it to you by email please email me at sylvia.elsmere@hotmail.co.uk