

Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, at one of the Delving Deeper sessions during Lent, we were reading the Bible passages on which the sermon for that week was based. One of the readings told about Paul warning the Philippians to be on guard against those who were insisting that certain Jewish practices had to be maintained in the newly-fledged Christian church. In order to show that he is qualified to dispute the matter, Paul gives an impressive list of qualifications that establish beyond doubt his Jewish credentials. He goes on to say however, that when set against the new way of salvation in Christ, he regards all these qualifications as loss. In fact, not only does he regard them as loss, he counts all that he once gloried in as rubbish.



As it happened, the person reading this passage was using the Authorised Version of the Bible (A.V.) where the word usually translated in most modern versions as 'rubbish' or 'refuse' is rendered 'dung'. It also happened that the reader gave particular emphasis to the word 'dung' during the reading. I pointed out how fortuitous this was and said that I would explain later why the emphasis was appropriate. In the discussion of the sermon that followed, however, I forgot to give an explanation, but since I felt it made an important point I thought I would make good that omission here.

The original Greek word rendered by the A.V. as 'dung' is a very strong one, and while it may seem shocking that someone as godly as Paul should use such a word, he has very good reason to do so. The word was probably uttered spontaneously by Paul in the passionate heat of his argument, but when recorded in written form in the Epistle, the shock value of the word can be seen as a literary device, serving to heighten the contrast between an old way of salvation and the new way. It's difficult to overstate the significance of this 'new thing', for it removes at a stroke all the elaborate – and laborious – sacrificial procedures stipulated by Jewish law. In a sense, the old way was salvation by (penitential) works. But now, Christ's once-for-all sacrifice on the cross for the sins of all humankind has done away with all that. If we can put our full trust in Christ as our Redeemer (the One who reconciles us, or puts us right with God), so we will be counted righteous in God's sight – certainly, it will not be by anything that we, by our own efforts can do. No wonder the gospel is described as good news; no wonder Paul describes the old pattern of Jewish rites as 'dung'.

I was reminded of this idea of rubbish, refuse, etc. when a friend – who has often sought to engage me in discussions on Christian faith, but who steadfastly denies that there is anything beyond this life – came into some money. It wasn't long before new acquisitions were being made and I was being shown or told about each one. I won't go into details, but they were the usual things to which people like to treat themselves when they are the beneficiaries of a windfall.

Now there's nothing wrong with these things in themselves, but in this instance, I couldn't help feeling that the term 'retail therapy' really did apply. My friend's spending spree seemed to me to be a forlorn attempt to satisfy a longing for security, or to obtain credibility amongst peers, for while such purchases may bring short-term excitement or satisfaction, their appeal very quickly withers. Compared with the promise of eternal life that Christ offers us, they are indeed, rubbish, or dung. The hymn, 'Glorious things of thee are spoken' captures it perfectly:

*'Fading are the worldling's pleasures,
All its boasted pomp and show.
Solid joys and lasting treasures,
None but Zion's children know.'*

As Christians therefore, in this Easter season, "let us rid ourselves of everything that gets in the way and instead, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end,*" rejoicing in the priceless hope he bought for us on that first Easter Day.

*(Heb.12:1 – GNB)

*Yours in Christ,
Michael*

Holy Week and Easter

A big thank you to everyone for making my first Holy Week and Easter among you such a joy. I couldn't have, and indeed didn't, do it all myself and so I would like to thank all those who played instruments, sung, read, lead services, cooked, decorated both churches and attended the services.

Kirstin



Summer Fair - All Saints in Bloom

Saturday, 22nd May 10 a.m.
Stalls and Refreshments until 1 p.m.
Flower Festival until 4 p.m.



None of us likes fund-raising but as a congregation All Saints agreed to work towards repaying the amount borrowed from the legacy fund last year. About £20,000 is outstanding so here we go!

The summer fair will be a huge attempt to raise money and have a good time too. The plan is for a Flower Festival in Church, a Coffee Morning in the halls with stalls, games and heaps of fun for children in and around the Church.

We hope to attract lots of people from outside our congregation to make this a financial success, but also to encourage many to see inside our lovely church. The theme of the Flower festival is Bible Stories and Sayings and ideas are flooding in.

There will be a plant stall, tombola, bric-a-brac, bottle stall, cake stall, hamper raffle, book stall, toy stall, teddy tombola, lucky dip and anything else you can suggest. Please do volunteer to help or donate goods. Goods can be left at the back of the Church in baskets provided.

Tickets are on sale now – sell them to your friends and neighbours – they will be entered into a prize draw for dinner for two at Las Ramblas or the Ashoka in Bearsden.

Children, please ask all your friends and their parents. There will be lots of activities: face painting, screen painting, arts and crafts, cross bow competition (child friendly!), sideshows, lucky dip, something to do with catching ducks and more...plus a pipe band.

Even if you are unfortunate enough to be away on the day, there is plenty you can do to help beforehand: sell tickets, donate goods and raffle prizes, or provide ideas. But we hope as many of you as possible will be there on the day with all your friends...and that the sun will shine.

Please get in touch with Janet Stack, 942 3921, janet.stack@btinternet.com or Mairi Ross, 01360 770001, mairi.e.ross@btinternet.com, for further details or offers of help. For the Flower Festival please contact Ann Caie 943 1192 ann.p.caie@googlemail.com

New Warden for Cumbrae

David Todd has been appointed as Warden of the College of The Holy Spirit at The Cathedral of the Isles on Cumbrae.

David, a freelance Arts Management Consultant and Event Manager based in Edinburgh, says "I am thrilled to have been appointed Warden of the College of The Holy Spirit at The Cathedral of the Isles on Cumbrae. I have a great challenge to turn the business of the College around and to this end we are promoting the College to church groups, music groups, bird-watching groups and anyone who might enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the Island and particularly the peace and tranquillity of the College and Cathedral. As well as my background in concert and theatre management, I have a number of years of hotel management experience which is going to be invaluable at the College. The College boasts three star status and we have a new chef who is producing excellent home-cooking. In between groups staying we can do Bed and Breakfast and have a number of rooms with en-suite facilities.

"I finished my B.D. degree at New College just before Christmas and was looking for a challenge that would use my previous experience but also my recent theological training. I joined Old Saint Paul's in Edinburgh a year ago and was hoping to maintain my links there where I am a reader, intercessor, pastoral visitor, occasional officiator at Morning and Evening Prayer, chairman of the Hall Committee and organiser of concerts in the Fringe. Happily I shall be able to maintain these links whenever I am on days off – off the Island - and I am also continuing as Director of the Edinburgh Festivals' Cavalcade.

"The great thing about Cumbrae is that it is relatively easy to travel to – train from Glasgow to Largs and a ten minute ferry to Cumbrae slip which is met by a bus that takes you to within three minutes of the College. However, once there, it feels as remote as any of the Hebrides.

"I have had a great welcome from the people of Cumbrae and I look forward to extending that to folk from all over Scotland when they come on retreat here."

For further details of Cumbrae and an outline of some activities programmed for 2010 visit <http://www.island-retreats.org/cumbrae.html>. David Todd's biography is available on www.dwst.net.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 9th-15th MAY

I'd like to give plenty of notice of Christian Aid Week and ask for your help.

Last year the Bearsden Christian Aid Committee sent a remarkable £42,274.23 to Christian Aid, £27,000 of which was collected through the door to door collections. The rest was raised through individual churches fundraising efforts and collections at Harvest and Christmas. It is vital therefore that we try to sustain this level of giving by supporting Christian Aid Week.

The week ends with the coffee morning at 10.00 a.m. on Saturday, 15th May at Bearsden North Halls (same place as last year). There are always a lot of plants, cakes and various other goods for sale as well as tea/coffee and pancakes which are included in the ticket price of £3. Do come and support it as the more people who come the more enjoyable it is and the more we raise. If you cannot come but would be willing to bake, All Saints are running the baking stall with New Kilpatrick Church. The halls are open on Friday, 14th from 6.30 - 8.30 p.m. or you could drop anything off on the morning itself. If transport is a problem I can collect people and/or cakes!

There is a very loyal band of door to door collectors for whom I am extremely grateful. But, as ever, I'm urgently looking for a few new ones so that all the streets we have been allocated get covered. The assigned streets are in the Mosshead area of Bearsden and the work really isn't onerous. You just need to deliver an envelope one day and pick it up a few days later. We've been doing it for so many years that many people have the envelope ready for collection on your return. As you will be armed with a bright red Christian Aid plastic bag people can see you come and if they don't want to give anything they generally just don't answer the door so embarrassing situations rarely occur.

If you feel you can spare a few hours during the week to help with the door to door collections (the weather is always balmy), please get in touch with me. If not, I look forward to seeing you at the coffee morning.

Celia Fisher (570 0903)

Swine Flu

Following the status of Swine Flu having been lowered by the Health Authorities, the College of Bishops has now removed the restrictions that were in place.



At the April meeting, we welcomed Julie Gemmell as our speaker – she was a teacher for the deaf for many years (and was confirmed with Jean Stirling in the days of Canon Bisset). In 2005, Julie went to Zambia to work with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) for three years teaching deaf children in a school which had formerly been a mission of the Dutch church in a remote area in the north of the country. One hundred and fifty children aged between five and twenty were mostly deaf as a result of cerebral malaria, had no hearing aids and were taught in English using American Sign Language (although British Sign Language is now being introduced). Julie gave us a great insight into the problems facing these children in a poverty stricken country where only twenty per cent of the population is employed and few earn enough money to pay taxes.

Our summer outing is to the Winnock Hotel in Drymen on Monday, 14th June – the cost is £16.50 inclusive of meal and gratuity. Names to be submitted to Elaine Perrett, if you wish to attend.

The Mary's Meals box will be at the May meeting and this will be the last chance to donate items this session. Donated items will be taken to the depot during May and the box will be available again in September.

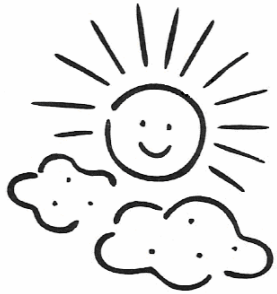
FOR YOUR DIARY:-

Friday, 30 th April	10.45 a.m.	Intercessions
Thursday, 6 th May	11.00 a.m.	Committee Meeting
Monday, 10 th May	7.30 p.m.	Branch Meeting (Leader: June Roach. Speaker: Children's Hospice Association of Scotland)
Wednesday, 12 th May	10.00 a.m.	MU Corporate Communion
Saturday, 22 nd May	11.00 a.m.	Festival service at Holy Trinity, Ayr (Commissioning of new Diocesan President and Chaplain. Preacher: the Bishop. Please bring packed lunch)
Saturday, 29 th May		Drymen Show – branch responsible for Mother and Baby Tent
Sunday, 30 th May		Intercessions to be remembered privately

June Roach

Sunshine Bags 2010

Last year this fundraising initiative brought in over £900 for our church funds and helped us towards paying for our many commitments. We would like to repeat that excellent effort in 2010. On Sunday, 9th May, Sunshine Bags will be made available again in a basket at the back of the church. These splendid new bags have been fashioned by Susan Gray. Please take a bag and, over the summer, fill it with your contribution to the work of All Saints' at home and abroad. They should be returned on Harvest Sunday, 3rd October, or soon thereafter. Your support of this effective method of fundraising really does make a difference to our church's mission and outreach.



Perhaps you are new to All Saints' and wonder what the sunshine bags are all about. Some years ago we introduced this initiative with the Vestry's approval. The idea is that if you have some joy or blessing to celebrate or are rejoicing at excellent weather at home (!) or on holiday, you later give thanks by putting a note or coin in your sunshine bag. Everyone is encouraged to take a bag, including members of the Sunday School and Discussion Group. "All are welcome".

Jean and Alex Stirling

Confirmation

A reminder that there will be confirmations in All Saints on 5th September. Could anyone who is interested in being confirmed and as yet hasn't mentioned it to Kirstin let her know by the end of May, thank you.

General Election

As you know, at every election for Westminster and Scottish parliaments ABC hold a hustings. This year the hustings are being held in the week of the election on Monday, 3rd May at Bearsden Baptist Church at 7.30 p.m.

Please remember and pray for all those who are standing for election and for the electorate.

Drumchapel News

Dear Friends at All Saints and St. Andrews,

Thought I should keep you up to date with what's happening in our little Church in Drumchapel. About two months ago two of our Ecumenical team, Eildon & Sheila, plus two of the staff from 3D Drumchapel and myself, started up a "Drop In" called Friendship House (no connection to Milngavie Friendship House). This drop in is for refugees and asylum seekers in Drumchapel and surrounding areas. It takes place on a Wednesday, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. with tea/coffee & biscuits and lunch provided. Before we could officially open we had to have our small kitchen upgraded to have a double sink and hand washing sink installed. Jonathan Sedgwick very kindly and very quickly installed the double sink before taking off on his Easter break and hopefully will complete the job on his return to work. The group we have attending now are about 10 or 11 adults and 3 children, this depends on when they have to "sign in" at the Home Office, so we don't always have them all together and we expect the numbers will grow as word gets around.

Can I say what lovely people they are, most of whom are from small villages in Africa. They cannot do enough to help in any way they can and for the first couple of weeks, we did the cooking, now they are doing it themselves. In fact, we now have a Rota of cooks, who each in turn cook a traditional meal from their own country. Famey likes to be in charge of the kitchen and she, along with another 3 of the ladies, are going on the Elementary Food Hygiene course next month, which they are so excited about. Instead of us teaching them, they are teaching us how to cook African meals.

One of the men, called Moses, who attends with his wife Fatima and toddler son Suleman, asked if he could do some gardening for us (music to our ears). Well Moses has dug up a large patch at the back of the Church and last Wednesday we took him to B&Q to choose what he needed and he was like a child in a toy shop. We purchased gardening tools and vegetables he wanted to plant. We now have cabbages, parsley, rhubarb (donated by Sue Brough), peas, strawberries (donated by Eildon) all planted with onions and spring onions waiting to go in. Moses comes along daily to tend his garden, even when no-one is there. He is so happy to have somewhere to go and get him and his family out of the house. As a small boy Moses helped run his Granny's' farm so was brought up tending the earth. God was surely looking after us when he sent Moses to us.

One of the ladies called Zodwa is getting engaged to be married on 21st June and is having her engagement party in our wee Church, please pray its a sunny day for her as I think she has invited everyone she knows or doesn't know to the party, so we'll have the overspill out the back. It's to be a traditional African party with lots of food and dancing, with everyone getting involved. Zodwa is so excited about her party, this is going to be a day in her life she never thought would happen. We are all looking forward to it and pray for sunshine in her life.

We play board games and an African game called Boles (not sure of the spelling), which Eildon brought back from one of her many travels and they all love this game as they know it better than us and we even have competitions with it. There are also crafts if they wish but sometimes they just like to chat while we play with the children. This week we will ask the ladies if they want to learn to knit or sew. Who knows maybe they'll be better than us at it, it wouldn't surprise me.

This group was started with the outreach money given to us last year by All Saints. We have also just received a grant of £500 from Sport Relief in Scotland but we will need to apply to everywhere we can think of to keep this very worthwhile project going. Please keep us in your prayers.

We really miss you all and miss being a part of Bearsden and Milngavie and remember the very happy times we spent with you in shared services. May God be with you all.

***God Bless
Jean Kerr***

Action Outreach

This is the new name for the Faith Development, Nurture and Outreach Group, who will in future be concentrating on outreach to the community and those on the fringes of All Saints.

Magazine

Please get any articles for inclusion in the June magazine to Jennifer Taylor, 37 Kilmardinny Crescent, Bearsden, (Jennifer.taylor461@ntlworld.com) by Sunday, 23rd May at the latest, thank you.