

Paws for Thought

Let me introduce myself. I'm Westieholm Douglas Briggs, but you can call me Dougie. I am the current canine occupant of the manse. You may have met me if you have visited. I'm the first one to the door and out of it when I get an opportunity! I don't do much since I retired to Ballantrae (I am almost 70 in dog years) so thought I would start a monthly column in the newsletter to tell you some of the goings on in the Manse.

December was an eventful month. As it happens I am writing this from my sick bed (i.e. the carpet in front of the fire). Late on Boxing Day I collapsed and had to go to the vet at 1am. The next day I had emergency surgery to remove my spleen. I'm ok now though – but some treats and a new tennis ball would help me feel much better. You know where I live. Anyway, earlier in December there was a “Sense of Advent” group in the manse. There were lots of people at it. I don't think daddy considered my delicate nose and ears when he was planning it, but I definitely enjoyed the taste one. It's amazing how clumsy people can be, dropping sausages, turkey and pancakes on the floor all the time. It was brilliant and I made lots of new friends.

Till next time,
Dougie



A little boy returned from Sunday school with a new perspective on the Christmas story. He had learned all about the Wise Men from the East who brought gifts to the Baby Jesus. He was so excited he could hardly wait to tell his parents.

As soon as he arrived home, he immediately began, "I learned all about the very first Christmas in Sunday school today! There wasn't a Santa Claus way back then, so these three skinny guys on camels had to deliver all the toys! And Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer with his nose so bright wasn't there yet, so they had to have this big spotlight in the sky to find their way around!"



Little Johnny had bought Grandma a book for her Christmas and wanted to write a suitable inscription. He racked his brain until suddenly he remembered that his father had a book with an inscription of which he was very proud, so Johnny decided to copy it. You can imagine Grandma's surprise when she opened her book, a Bible, and found neatly inscribed the following phrase: "To Grandma, with the compliments of the author."



Weather

December started wet and relatively mild but from the 10th it was much colder with frost on nearly every night. By the 20th snow or hail began to lie widely. On Christmas Day evening sleet fell on frozen ground and by Boxing Day morning the local roads became like an ice rink. It was the coldest December of the last 7 years.

Up until the 28th the total rainfall was 33.5mm (5.25ins), below the normal for the last 13 years 185mm (7.27ins).

Taking the year as a whole the rainfall was a little above average but not as wet as last year, and the mean temperature was not far from average. The warmest day was the 29th of June with 25.9°C (79°F), and the lowest overnight was minus 5.7°C (22°F) early on the 6th of February. On Christmas Eve morning it was minus 5.1°C (23°F).

From our Prayer Correspondent



For reading and Meditation—Titus Ch.2 v.11-14

We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ—(v.13).

At the beginning of the New Year we await your coming Lord,
You are the light and hope of a world filled with darkness,
We do not know the time or the place when you will return,
But you assure us you will return, we live in expectation,
We celebrate your birth, You are the bright morning star,
At dawn of this new year help us to follow you to remain steadfast in a world that tries to destroy our belief in your being.
In you we place our trust hope and faith for a brighter future,
You are the light, the truth, and the way to eternal life.
Help us widen our circle of care as we seek to do your will each day
To speak to others of your love.
Open our hearts as we meditate on your word Blessed Jesus in your mercy
hear our prayers.
May you all have a Blessed New Year filled with Hope and Joy.

In Jesus name Pat.



Leprosy Mission

During January and February, I will be more than happy to take any donations for the Leprosy Mission.

World Leprosy Day is 31st Jan. 2010, there is still many, many cases of Leprosy in our world to-day and many injustices caused by the disease. In Psalm 82: Verse 3 it says

Give justice to the poor and the orphan, uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute.

Penny Savage

A Time for Reflection

The old year is gone a new year begun
A time to repent of all things undone
Time to reflect on thoughts words and deeds
When we have hurt others and neglected their needs
Oh Jesus our Saviour our sins you forgive
Let us forgive others that in you we might live
You do not hold grudges or remember our sins
If truly repentant open hearts will be cleansed
Blessed hope of the world our glorious lord
Let us live as you taught us obeying your word
Living and loving each other in Christ
Gentle and caring thoughtful and wise
Light in our darkness come into our lives.

Patricia Thackray

News Letter



Items for next news letter should be in by 28th January.



Used Stamps

As well as used stamps, we also collect old spectacles and used ink cartridges (except Epson). Please note! All stamps should have a 10mm or more border around the stamp.

Thanks



Dear Friends,

Although not yet 'Up and Running' I am now 'Up and About' on my new bionic knee!! and would like to take this opportunity to say a big 'Thank you' to you all for your kindness; support and generosity over the past eight weeks or so, for all the prayers and cards, for all the books (especially the joke books and sudoku), for all the delicious treats and for the many visits that helped very much to pass rather long days.

I hope to be back among you all very soon and my heartfelt thanks to once again.

Eric Peacock



Engagement

The Inchcape family are pleased to announce that Fergus (Glenapp) and Rebecca Jackson became engaged recently. They plan to have the wedding in August 2010 at Rebecca's home in Northamptonshire. Rebecca has already had several happy visits to Glanapp.



When did the custom of making New Year Resolutions begin and why? ... The early Christians believed the first day of the new year should be spent reflecting on past mistakes and resolving to improve oneself in the new year. It is believed that the Babylonians were the first to make New Year's resolutions.

SHOE BOX APPEAL 2009



Thanks goes to everyone who filled and donated a shoebox in doing so it helped to make the grand total of 111 shoe boxes.

Christmas Cards



This year's Christmas Card delivery raised £100 for Church funds. Thanks to all who supported the scheme and a big thank you to May Cunningham and Jeanie and Jackie Maxwell for their help in delivering the cards.

Meg Peacock.

Prayer Meeting

Our next prayer meeting is on **Wednesday 27th January 2009** at 7:30pm in the Manse. Please come along as we pray for our church and other issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

Kirk Session and Board meet on
Wed. 13th January

Creche



There is a new creche rota and if anyone would like to add their name to it, please speak to Barbara Ogston (831252).



Film Night

Our next Ballantrae Film Night is **15th January**.
6pm – Monsters vs Aliens (2009 - PG)
8pm – Bandslam (2009 - PG)

Please spread the word, as the titles of the films cannot appear on the posters outside of the church.

Young Women's Group



Claire would like to say a special thank you to all the girls who helped with the Christmas decorations. They look great! Thanks also to Meg and Stephen for organising the tree.
Next meeting

Wed. 20th January 2010

Heather O'Hare: Reiki

Wed. 3rd February

Curling at North West Castle Hotel



CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD

Next meet on

Mon. 18th January 2010

Mrs C Thorburn :

Beating the Winter Blues



S.W.R.I

Will meet on **Monday 11th Jan.**
Ruby Weir: "Beadwork"
New members welcome to attend our monthly meetings

Pecan Toffee Cake

Ingredients

300g Pecans halves
140g Stoned Dates
200g Butter—softened
200g light Muscovado Sugar
1tsp Mixed Spice
4 Eggs—beaten
140g Self Raising Flour
Pinch Salt
Maple Syrup to serve



Tip 100g pecans into a processor and whizz until fine place in a bowl. Put dates in a pan with enough water to cover, boil for 5mins until very soft. Drain, discarding the liquid then whizz in the processor until smooth.
Heat oven to 180°C/fan 160°C/gas 4.
Butter and line a 23cm/9ins cake tin.

Beat the butter, sugar and spice together until light and creamy, then tip in dates, pecans, eggs and a pinch of salt and beat briefly until smooth.

Fold in the flour with a metal spoon, then put into cake tin and level the top, sprinkle remaining nuts over the top and bake for 40mins or until risen and golden and a skewer comes out clean.
Serve warm with drizzles of maple syrup and scoops of maple crunch ice cream.

Enjoy.

LISTS AND ROTAS

Flower Calendar



Just to remind everybody the flower calendar is at the church entrance, anyone wishing to donate flowers should add their name against the appropriate Sunday's date.



Tea Duty

February 7th

Lorna Greenhill, Florence Brown, Liz Gregg, Georgina McKinley & Penny Savage

Church Cleaning Team

Jan.13th. Robert & Caroline Dalrymple

Jan.24th John &Janice McIlwraith

If unable to fulfil your given date, please swap with another team. If you can help with the Church cleaning rota, contact **Liz Gregg, tel. 841686.**

Sunday Duty Rota

Jan.		Feb
3rd	D	7th C
10th	E	14th D
17th	F	21st E
24th	A	28th F
31st	B	

Message from the Manse



Dear Friends,

Let me begin by wishing you a happy New Year. I can't believe that's 2010 already. Where has the time gone since the millennium? Can you remember what you were doing in January 2000?

In January 2000, I had recently graduated from Edinburgh University and was back living at home with my parents, unsure as to what I direction I wanted my life to take. After six months of doing virtually nothing, I began working in a Christian Bookshop in Kirkcaldy, and during my time there, I began to sense God's call to become a minister. On reflection, I had known a calling since 1998, but had ignored it as much as I could. However, as I sought direction during those months at home, I became sure of my calling.

I was still unsure if I had what it would take, and so certain of my calling but dubious whether or not the timing was right, I applied to the Church of Scotland, to be told that it wasn't. And so as that door remained closed for the moment, I knew for certain God was with me and his calling into ministry was real. I think the words of Psalm 16 verse 5 described my faith at that time, "You, LORD, are all I have, and you give me all I need; my future is in your hands." I knew God was with me and would, lead me on the path that he wanted me to take. And he did, because unknown to me at the time, the plan was that I would go to Glasgow, work for RBS, meet Barbara, study and train for the ministry, and then come here.

If in January 2000, someone had asked me to describe the path I would take in the next ten years; I think I would have got it entirely wrong. Very little has worked out exactly the way I expected it to, but throughout the years, I have tried to trust God and rely on him, though like all of us, sometimes I have managed better than other times.

This year, I pray that whatever you do and whatever uncertainties you face, you would be strengthened by the fact that God is with us, and our future is indeed in his hands.

God bless,

Stephen



CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BALLANTRAE PARISH CHURCH

LINKED WITH

St. COLMON

www.ballantraeparishchurch.org.uk

Minister: Revd. Stephen Ogston

Tel. 01465831252 E-mail: ogston@macfish.com

Printed by Century21 Computing

