

CHURCH NEWS

News from
Skene Parish
Church,
Westhill

February 2023

Dear Friends.....

What's in a name?

Growing up I was educated at Foyle and Londonderry College Grammar School. A mouthful, I'm sure you would agree. The name told the story of an amalgamation between two former schools. Foyle College, a boys' only establishment, so old the pupils were able to watch the finishing touches to the city walls outside. And Londonderry High School, a girls' only establishment. They came together in 1976 and as a pupil there in the 1990s I remember the female teachers, who had come from the High School, making a point of us always using the full name. I was a bit disappointed when in 2011 the Board of Governors decided to rebrand the school Foyle College. It felt like the boys had won out.

Names are incredibly important to us. From the farmland that surrounds us (e.g., Auchronie), to the streets named after people who made a difference in the life of our community (e.g., Dawson Drive), to the names we choose for our homes, to the names given to us at birth. I love finding out what place names and Christian names mean. You can learn about the geography, geology, or the history of an area simply by researching its name. In scripture, often a name is given because of a particular attribute or because God is making a statement. Think of Abram becoming Abraham or Simon becoming Peter.

One of the questions that arises when two churches move towards union is that of the name. The Church of Scotland (I think for legal reasons) is very specific about the parameters which must be met when a new name is established. In our case, it would be the name of a

newly united charge – taking in Blackburn, Garlogie, Kingswells, Lyne of Skene, Kirkton of Skene and Westhill – as well as everywhere in between. However, as is currently the case, the church buildings would be able to retain their specific names – Skene Kirk and Trinity Church.

A small group of people, with representatives from both congregations, are currently tasked with helping us discern what that new name could be. We'll be asking for your input. For all of us, it is important to remember that being a united charge means we all start afresh. We want everyone to feel recognised and welcome. We know it will take time for people to become accustomed



to the change. Grace, patience, humility will all be needed to move us from two parishes to one; from two congregations to one; from two church families to one – all the while, acknowledging the communities within that carry a strong sense of their own identity.

But in many ways, this is the story of the Christian faith. In Ephesians we read:

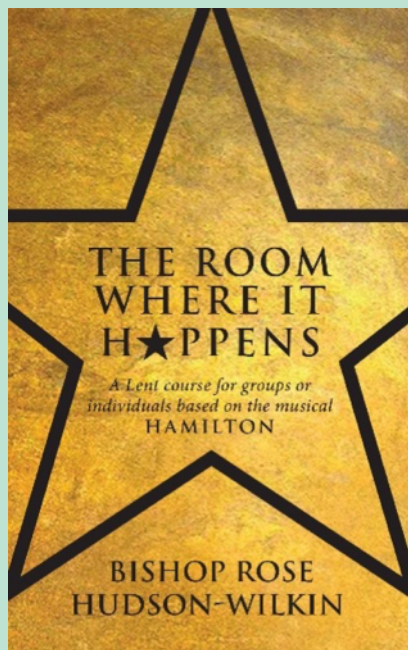
For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

Therefore, when we struggle in the task, we have a Lord who leads the way for us.

Blessings,

Rev Stella

Messages



LENT BIBLE STUDY

Starting on Wednesday 1st March at 7.30pm, this study looks at the biblical themes which appear in the musical Hamilton.

“The course has been written in the hope that all ages can be involved in the room where it happens for discussions about what the Bible and the experience of Christian faith teach us about some of the big issues faced in the musical by Alexander Hamilton: his responses to injustice, adversity and temptation, his search for identity, and his realisation that he (and all of us) can make a difference in the world.

The course has five weekly sessions suitable for both groups and individuals, exploring the following themes:

- *Identity and Belonging (01.03.23)*
- *Ambition and Temptation (08.03.23)*
- *Forgiveness and Redemption (15.03.23)*
- *Love and Sacrifice (22.03.23)*
- *Hope and Courage through Adversity (29.03.23)*

We will be meeting online (via ZOOM). If you would like us to order a book for you, please let Rev Stella know by 15th February. It would be helpful to watch the musical in advance of the bible study and we will arrange opportunities for folks to do that with others in the fortnight running up to the start of the course. Hamilton is currently available on Disney+.

LENTEN LUNCHES AND SERVICES

This year, Lent begins on Wednesday 22nd February. Following on from the success of last year, when we were able to be back in person, we are organising our usual ecumenical services and soup lunches on the Fridays in Lent. We will be meeting at 12.30pm for worship. Here are the dates for your diary:

- Friday 24th February (hosted by Church of Scotland)
- Friday 3rd March (hosted by Westhill Community Church)
- Friday 10th March (hosted by Trinity Roman Catholic Congregation)
- Friday 17th March (hosted by Church of Scotland)
- Friday 24th March (hosted by Westhill Community Church)
- Friday 31st March (hosted by Trinity Roman Catholic Congregation)

On Friday 7th April we are planning a joint ecumenical Good Friday service, but the details are still to be worked out.

PRAYER GROUP

Our church is committed to prayer and the group was set up two years ago, meeting online early on Monday mornings. From **1st February** we are moving to 9pm on Wednesday evenings and is open to all. The group is led by one of the members but no one is asked to lead or even speak if they don't want to.

Once we've decided on the topics, we switch our sound off and pray privately in our own words. We start with a piece of scripture and then move on to pray about people in the church who are unwell or needing support as well as things happening in the life of the church. We also give thanks for prayers which have been answered.

The Zoom link will be

Topic: Prayer Group Time: Feb 1, 2023 09:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2183854139> Meeting ID: 218 385 4139

Contact Eva in the office if you would like more information.

Messages

TRUSTEE AWAYDAY AND SERVICE TIMES

It's been our practice over many years now to meet as elders one Saturday in the year and take a long view of all that is happening in our congregation. This year, we felt it was important to involve our board members and on Saturday between 40 and 50 people gathered to discuss various topics. This included an important conversation around service times. With the departure of our associate minister, it is difficult to maintain the current pattern of worship. In addition, with the potential union with Kingswells being worked through, it is important that they have an opportunity to get to know me before I become the minister of the united charge.



Each table came back with a different proposal and we had quite a range of options. It was agreed that we would follow a pattern of joint services, similar to what we usually do in the summer. This will start at Trinity Church on 12th February and we will alternate each month between the buildings. The current service times will remain unchanged. We will continue to provide an online offering although this may be delivered later in the day as we are exploring the possibility of recording the service at Skene. We will also be looking to provide transport where needed and when we are at Skene Kirk, we will still be continuing our GRID and Jigsaw programmes. We will also have a spread of services during Holy Week.

Finally, it was agreed that it is really important for us to begin to build relationships with the Kingswells congregation. To help with this, we will be attending their services on the last Sunday of the month. Again, we will look to provide transport.



I know that this is a significant change for us, but I'm excited about the prospect of us coming together in advance of the union. The Kirk Session will review the pattern of our worship in August and we pray that by then we will have a new associate minister in post, who has come to know the congregation.

SERVICE TIMES FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS

February 12 th	– Trinity Church	10.30am
February 19 th	– Trinity Church	10.30am
February 26 th	– Kingswells Church	11.00am
March 5 th	– Skene Kirk	11.15am
March 12 th	– Skene Kirk	11.15am
	– Service of Holy Communion	
March 19 th	– Skene Kirk	11.15am

March 26 th	– Kingswell Church	11.00am
April 2 nd	– Trinity Church	10.30am
	– Palm Sunday	
April 9 th	– Trinity Church	10.30am
	– Easter Sunday	
April 16 th	– Trinity Church	10.30am
April 23 rd	– Trinity Church	10.30am
April 30 th	– Kingswells Church	11.00am

Messages

Callum's Corner

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES NEWS



Hi Everyone it's been great to be getting back into the swing of things as the term has begun, both in the church and on our schools work! It has been great to have Bible Alive back in our primary schools following the Pandemic, with Crombie being back last term, and Westhill and Elrick this term. A huge thank you to Alison, Ann and Pauline for their work in bringing this back and for sharing such great stories with the classes they have worked with!

This term in Messy Church we are continuing our tour of our Heroes of the Bible. We will be hearing all about heroes such as St Peter, and Mary and Martha. We will have a mix of fun crafts, songs, and games to go along with the story on the last Sunday of each month at 4pm in Trinity Church. Don't worry if you have missed any of the rest of the series each one is a stand alone! A warm welcome, along with a warm cuppa, awaits so bring your kids or grandkids down and join in the fun!

We are always on the look out for folk to get involved with the work with our young people. If you feel a nudge about using a particular skill or have some time going spare please do have a chat with me! The same goes for any of the work we are doing should you have any questions, or are just wandering what we are doing I'm always available!



WE ARE A WARM WELCOME SPACE



Warm Wednesdays at Trinity Church began back in November as part of the Warm Spaces Initiative. A warm space is offered every Wednesday in Trinity Church from 12 till 4pm. Hot homemade soup is served between 12 and 2pm with teas, coffees and biscuits for the rest of the afternoon. Do come along and see what we are all about.

Each week, the number of folk who attend has increased as has the friendship and fellowship on these occasions. All are welcome. There are other venues in Westhill where you can enjoy a warm space so look out for the posters that will tell you where and when.

Farewell to Ibidun

On Sunday 22nd January, we said farewell to our Associate Minister, Rev Ibidun Daramola, and presented her with flowers, a communion set and a cheque from the congregation, following our collection for her. We prayed for her and her family as they embark on a new calling around prophetic ministry.

There was great singing and evening a little bit of dancing, as we gave thanks for all that Ibidun has brought to us over her two years. We then moved through to the back hall and enjoyed a soup lunch together, followed by cake.

Thanks to everyone who helped prepare for the day and who worked behind the scenes to make it a very special



Farewell to Ibidun



Other News



1st SKENE BOYS' BRIGADE

We had a successful period leading up to Christmas with the Company section boys (aided by the 3rd year Juniors) delivering around 400 cards and raising almost £300 - a big thank you to all who supported us. We also held a family quiz night which brought in £200. We are currently heading towards our biggest fundraiser of the year: our Spring Fayre, which will take place on March 25th at Trinity church. Please come and support us - entry is by ticket which includes tea or coffee and biscuits.

We are now well into our new term of BBs, all sections are making good progress with their activities. The Anchors are applying their building skills using blocks and Lego to recreate some famous fairytales and are looking forward to a trip to the Aberdeen Science centre. The Juniors are progressing towards their badge work targets with a focus on sports and games. Senior boys are working towards their President's badge and Queen's badge awards, with our two President's badge boys having just completed their 'Building your Skills' course at BB HQ. We have 3 boys heading off to Kincaig in April, for their Queen's badge completion course.

As the weather improves we look forward to having some cycles and hill walks added to our activity list. We have 10 Junior section boys heading up to Abernethy for an activity weekend and, of course, our annual summer camp - normally for company section boys, but this year open to Juniors too - and closer to home.

Anchor boys are now at capacity however there is still space for Juniors (P4-6) and Company section (P7 upwards). Remember...The Adventure begins here!

Niall MacBeath - Company Captain



1st SKENE GIRLS' BRIGADE

Our girls are entering Divisional Competitions at the start of February and are practising hard for them with great excitement.

We are also going to be attending the Girls Brigade Divisional Display in The Beach Ballroom on the 5th March where the competition winners will be taking part and receiving their trophies.

As a Company we will be holding our own Open Night on Monday 27th March at 7pm in Trinity Church where the girls will be showcasing the physical items they have been learning and they will also be receiving their badges and trophies for the session. Everyone is welcome to come along and see what we do.

Any questions please do not hesitate to contact myself:

Fiona Cumming (Captain) on 07792471199 or email fionacumming26@icloud.com

SKENE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE - MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Thank you to all who have donated so generously.

We had a very successful Burns Supper at Echt Hall on Friday 27th January 2023 the first since the pandemic. Please check our Facebook for pictures of the night. Amount raised will be in the next bulletin.

Our next event will be The Macmillan Quiz to be held in the Milne Hall Skene on Friday 24th February 2023 at 8pm, details can be found on our facebook site.

On Sunday March 19th we will be supporting the Model Fest at Thainstone Inverurie. We also hope to hold another Fizzy Flycup - details on our Facebook page and on posters.

You can follow us on facebook: Skene Fundraising Committee-Macmillan Cancer Support. In addition we do place Posters around Westhill with the next up coming events.

To donate to Macmillan Skene Fundraising Committee go to macmillan-org.enthuse.com. The funds raised by the committee remain within this area.

If you would like to be a volunteer or join our committee please contact me at the number below.

Alison Troup -07974790765

Other News



ECO GROUP UPDATE

Skene Parish Church is still actively involved as a congregation in trying to do what is right for our planet, for God's amazing Creation. This is just to update you on what is happening.

The ink cartridge collection is still ongoing and just at the end of 2022 we raised a further £28 for Christian Aid. Thank you.

Aluminium Foil is also coming in by the bagful! I am also given some interesting metal items to sell on too which all adds up to the Garden Fund. Thank you.

Well done to all who have been placing items in the new soft plastic recycling box. We have been noting that User Groups have been fantastic and using this bin. So much so, we hardly have anything in the general bin these days. Over the past two months, I have taken several black bin bags of soft plastic to the local shops who support this initiative. Thank you and well done.

Have you noticed that 'something' is happening at Aldi? This is to be a Deposit Return Scheme' area. This is in line with the Scottish Governments Initiative. So watch this space and get ready with your glass bottle, plastic bottles and aluminium cans!!

There's not much to report in the garden at the moment but bulbs have been planted in the planters at the front and back door of Trinity. Thanks must go to a member of the congregation who donated some of the bulbs.

Sheila Gray



RECYCLING

Ever wondered what to do with your empty toothpaste tubes and the like? They are impossible to clean out and often not made of recyclable materials.

Well, Pauline McEachen came up with the Recycle At Boots Scheme. Boots will take those healthcare and wellness products that are difficult to recycle items in our kerbside recycling. This might be because they are too small, made of composite materials or indeed from non-recyclable materials.

These products might be travel minis, mascara, compacts, samples, lipsticks, compacts, toothpaste tubes and other creams and lotion containers. They will accept most products that are sold in Boots stores but encourage customers not to take back containers that could be recycled locally such as glass.

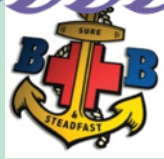


As well as being incredibly eco friendly, Boots will also reward you! When you take your items along to the stores (Union Square, Bon Accord Centre, Bridge of Dee, Inverurie) you will be able to scan your items. You need to take a minimum of 5 items and you will need to spend £10 or more and they will reward you with 500 points on your Boots Card – that's worth £5! See how you get on! I am definitely going to give it a go! You can find out more at Boots.com. Thank you Pauline.

And while you are in town, why not be a real Eco Warrior and return all your pill sleeves to Superdrug!

Sheila Gray

Notices



1st Skene Boys Brigade Spring Fayre

25th March at Trinity Church Westhill
10 am to 12 noon

Entry includes tea /coffee/juice and
baking.

All the usual stalls and games plus our
raffle with a star prize of £100.

NEWSLETTER DATES FOR 2023

Future deadline dates for contributions are:

April issue	24th March
June issue	26th May
August issue	21st July
October issue	22nd September
Christmas issue	17th November

June and October issues will be online only but
the others will be printed for distribution.



*We remember with thanksgiving
those who have died recently, and
we offer their relatives our prayerful
sympathy:*

Louise McWilliam	Westdyke Avenue
Moira Cassie	Skene
Edward Duncan	Eastside Avenue
Mary Duncan	Straik Place
Marcus Booth	Ferryhill
Jude MacDonald	Keirhill Avenue
Betty Mair	Inchmarlo
Bob Simpson	Drumoak

SAFEGUARDING

The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is
of vital importance. If you see or hear something that
concerns you, please contact Sheena McIntosh or Ann
Paterson, Safeguarding Coordinators through:
Safeguarding.skeneparish@gmail.com



AFTERNOON FILM SHOWS

Coming soon once a month on
Wednesday afternoons.....
watch out for more information
on the weekly service sheet or
the website.

GUILD NEWS

We had a very informative talk this month about the
work of the Aberdeen Mountain Rescue Team. The
topic for February 13th is UNIDA, one of the Guild
projects. The speaker will be Rev Sarah Brown.

It has been great to welcome some new members to
our Guild. There's plenty room for more so if you're
free on a Monday afternoon at 2pm we would love to
see you.

The dates of our forthcoming meetings are 13th
February, 13th March, 10th April and 8th May.

We are also delighted to announce that the Guild will
be holding a "Big Sing" in Queen's Cross Church,
Aberdeen at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday 22nd March,
2023. This will be a ticketed event and if you would
like to come along and join in fellowship and
friendship at this songs of praise, please contact
Flora Buthlay tel 01224 741186 or e-mail
buthlayf15@gmail.com

Margaret Smith

BADMINTON

The Badminton group continues to meet on Monday
evenings at 7.30pm.

Beginners are always welcome and spare racquets
are available to borrow for a trial if you are not sure.

If you are interested please drop Barbara a line at
barbaraemmerson@hotmail.com

The Church Office.....

Eva Will is available from 9.00am to noon on
Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please get in
touch by phone or email.

tel: 01224 742512

email: info.skeneparish@gmail.com

The next issue of the Newsletter will be in April.
Please send articles to barbaraemmerson@
hotmail.com by **Friday 24th March**.