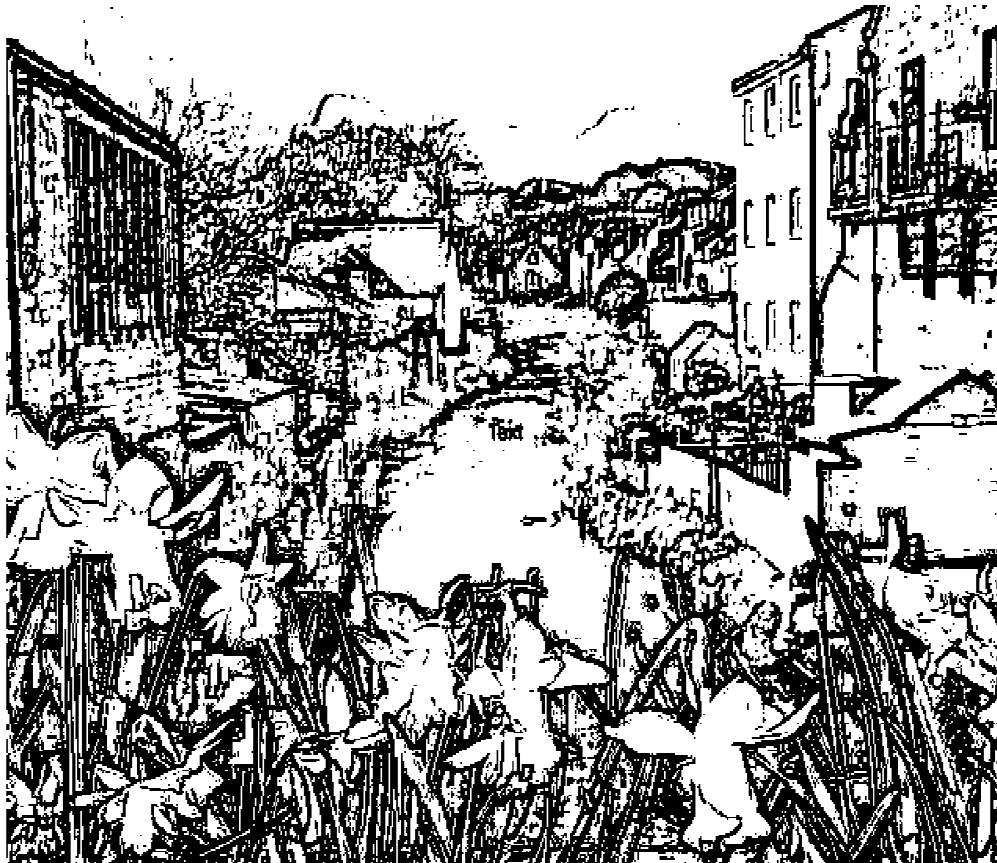


connections



the magazine of
Stonehaven Carronside
Church of Scotland


Summer

2024

Scottish Charity Number SC013165

CONNECT WITH CONNECTIONS

As you are aware, this is the summer edition of **connections** and is our 3-month summer magazine so there are dates to note in the calendar, particularly the summer sale which will take place in the Town Hall on Saturday 31st August. Make sure you come along and support this important event in the calendar, as it is one of our main fundraising events.

You will find a Gift Aid form inside the magazine this month. Please read the article on page 5 and complete and return the form. Gift Aid boosts our income significantly, so we need your returns to enable us to claim what is due to us.

Most of the church organisations take a break over the summer and the Editorial team is also taking a break until the middle of August, when we start work on the September edition. The deadline for copy is Wednesday 21st August and you can email it to me at jenniferrmacdonald@hotmail.com

What makes a good summer for you? For some it is watching Wimbledon or trips away, getting outdoors and gardening-inspired by the Chelsea Flower Show. All of us on the Spotlight editorial team wish you an enjoyable and safe summer, wherever you go and whatever the weather (hopefully good!) and there is a long quiz to keep you occupied throughout the coming weeks!

Editorial Group:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Elaine Craig | Steve Craig |
| Diane Dart | Catherine Knox |
| Katherine Mathers | Sandra McLennan |
| Jennifer Macdonald | |

SAFEGUARDING

Our Church should be a place where everyone is safe from harm and abuse.

If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or if it is reported to you, please report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator (details below), who will then contact the Safeguarding Service for advice.

Contact: Carronside Church Safeguarding Coordinator

David Macdonald, 764 750

email: davidmacdonald153@gmail.com

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us" Ralph Waldo Emerson

LETTER FROM THE MANSE

LETTER FROM THE MANSE

June 2024

I want to start off by saying that I had a wonderful time doing the West Highland Way and I finished it with only one blister, getting nearly stuck in one bog and falling once, which I say is not bad for 96 miles in 7 days.

This walk was such an amazing thing and I am so glad I did it and did the whole thing. It amazed me how doing something like this can really impact you.

I will say that I was so nervous even before driving to Fort William to leave my car there. I was speaking with people at a café in the Fort William train station and was given reassurance by a group from the USA, who had just completed parts of it. I then spoke with a family from France, and the mother assured me that I would be fine. I was in complete awe of them as the family, with three children all under the age of 11, had camped every night, except for two nights when the weather was really bad.

At some points, it seemed like it didn't quite matter what people said to me to reassure me that I was going to be fine, I was still quite nervous about going on this adventure.

The day came to begin. I didn't sleep well the night before because of all my nerves but I started my day. I gave the luggage transfer company my big bag and so there was, really, no turning back.

I found my way to the start, took the pictures to mark my beginning, and started off. I started walking, then started remembering why I signed up for this and the nerves started to dissipate.

I wonder how often people get nervous about something new, something unknown, something uncomfortable, or challenging, and allow those nerves to stop us from pursuing something that we have wanted to do.

It can be easy to allow that fear or nervousness to stop you from doing something. One thing that made a big difference for me throughout this adventure was the other people who journeyed with me during each day. It was amazing how much of a difference it made to me each day to have someone to talk with along the way.

There was one day, which was my longest day, 19 miles. The weather forecast was not looking promising, with rain and thunderstorms forecast. I was quite nervous about this, because this was the day when the trail was in the most open, exposed and remote areas. I started making a plan to take a bus or taxi to one spot that was further along the trail, and then do the rest from there.

I spoke with a few other people who were doing the same distance, and they gave me some assurance and encouragement. I realised

LETTER FROM THE MANSE contd./ FAMILY NEWS

I was reassured that the chance of lightning was slim to none, so I did what I could to prepare, including getting some more snacks. I embraced and committed to doing the whole 19 miles and I am so glad I did. Soon after I started, I met 3 people who were walking the same distance, and I walked the rest of the day with them. That made the time go by so well and it was one of my most favourite days.

One thing that I really learned through this adventure is that God provides. I truly experienced this, and I am so grateful to remind myself of this.

My encouragement to each of you is to take a step, and keep going, even when you are nervous or scared. Trust and rely on the goodness of God and that God will provide what you need through each of your adventures.

Sarah

FAMILY NEWS

DEATHS

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life"

2024

4th May Isabella Murray, Stonehaven, latterly of Glens Care Home, Edzell

17th May Kathleen Birnie, latterly of Mowat Court

20th May Peter William Mutch, Stonehaven

FUNERALS

15th May Peter Stephen

Our thoughts and prayers are with members who have had a bereavement of a close relative who was not themselves a member of Stonehaven Carronside Church.

PRAYER GROUP

The Prayer Group offers on-going prayer support to those who wish it or to those for whom we are requested to pray. Confidentiality is always respected.

We also continue to send cards of support to anyone in church or the community who needs it.

If you require prayer support or wish a card to be sent to someone to lift their spirits, please **contact** one of the following members of the team:

Moira McRae, Pat Logue, Ros Marshall, Hazel Paterson or Carol Balsillie.

GIFT AID

GIFT AID

As you all know a lot of work has gone on behind the scenes to ensure the smooth joining of Dunnottar Parish and South Parish to become Carronside Parish Church of Scotland. This includes work on the financial side.

To keep us up to date we are now updating the Gift Aid form which most people who give regularly to the church and pay tax have signed. The form has been updated to reflect our new name and Charity Number.

We obviously want to claim our due GIFT AID donations as soon as we can so we are asking everyone, even if you have signed before, to complete, sign and return our new form which is inside this edition of the magazine.

Please return it to the church on a Sunday or put it through the letterbox at St Bridget's as quickly as possible. You could also post it to St Bridget's Hall, Bridgefield Terrace, Stonehaven AB39 2JF.

If you can do so, can you please make your donations by monthly standing order to:

Stonehaven Carronside Church of Scotland
Account Number 00831530
Sort Code 80-09-68

PRIVACY NOTICE

You are giving your personal data to **STONEHAVEN CARRONSIDE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND** as the Data Controller.

Your Personal Data: You are being asked to supply your name, address, postcode and signature.

Purpose: The purpose of processing the personal data we ask for is to complete a Gift Aid declaration. The legal basis for this processing is the Legitimate Activities of the Church as a not-for-profit organisation. Your personal data will not be used for any other purpose without your consent. If you do not provide the personal data requested, we cannot complete the declaration.

Data Subjects: Individuals making a monetary offering or donation to this congregation.

Sharing Your Personal Data: Your personal data will only be shared with HMRC as an independent data controller. This sharing is solely for the purpose of administering Gift Aid declarations.

Your Rights: You have rights under the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information visit the website at www.churchofscotland.org.uk/using-our-site/privacy-centre.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Hazel McCartney - Tel 07748 270132

DATES FOR THE DIARY – June, July, August

| MONTHLY CARE HOME SERVICES: | | | |
|--|-----------|--|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edenholme second Sunday of the month, 2.30pm • Clashfarguhar fourth Sunday of the month, 2.30pm | | | |
| JUNE | | | |
| Sun | 2 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Mon | 3 | Bible Study - St. Bridget's | 2pm |
| Thu | 6 | Café Carronside - St. Bridget's | 10-11.30am |
| Sun | 9 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church Suresh leading worship | 10.30am |
| Thu | 13 | Café Carronside - St. Bridget's | 10-11.30am |
| Sun | 16 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Mon | 17 | Bible Study - St. Bridget's | 2pm |
| Thu | 20 | Café Carronside - St. Bridget's | 10-11.30am |
| Sat | 22 | Stonehaven Chorus afternoon tea-St. Bridget's | 2pm |
| Sun | 23 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Mon | 24 | Bible Study - St. Bridget's | 2pm |
| Thu | 27 | Café Carronside - St. Bridget's | 10-11.30am |
| Sun | 30 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church communion | 10.30am |
| JULY | | | |
| Sun | 7 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Sun | 14 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Sun | 21 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Sun | 28 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church communion | 10.30am |
| AUGUST | | | |
| Sun | 4 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Sun | 11 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Sun | 18 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church | 10.30am |
| Sun | 25 | Morning Worship - Dunnottar Church communion | 10.30am |
| Sat | 31 | Summer Sale and Coffee morning- St Bridget's | 10am-12pm |
| Hall Bookings : Hazel McCartney - Tel 07748 270132 email carronsidehall@gmail.com | | | |

FLOWERS / DUTY ROTAS

| FLOWER ROTA | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| JUNE | | JULY | | AUGUST | |
| 2 | D Blacklaw | 7 | J Irvine | 4 | L Vass |
| 9 | J Houghton | 14 | M Marshall | 11 | R Duncan |
| 16 | S Melville | 21 | J Beaton | 18 | H Paterson |
| 23 | R Still | 28 | R Marshall | 25 | D & J Macdonald |
| 30 | L Bentley | | | | |

Contacts: Joyce Beaton, 07312 092684

Ruby Still, 07753 803449

CHURCH DUTY ROTA

| JUNE | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|--|--|
| 2 | Door Reader | R Robertson, K Smith J Balsillie | Sound L Anderson Coffee S Davidson, J Lawrence |
| 9 | Door Reader | C Balsillie, C Knox C Balsillie | Sound J Balsillie Coffee M Whittet, D Blacklaw |
| 16 | Door Reader | A Cairnduff, M Arthur M Arthur | Sound R Marshall Coffee D Dart, S Melville |
| 23 | Door Reader | C Eddie, J Macdonald C Eddie | Sound D Macdonald Coffee J Houghton, M Arthur |
| 30 | Door Reader | I Allan, R Still R Duncan | Sound D Hunter Coffee C Balsillie, C Swankie |
| JULY | | | |
| 7 | Door Reader | J Houghton, M McRae M McRae | Sound L Anderson Coffee R Duncan, J Beaton |
| 14 | Door Reader | L Pollard, J Cairnduff L Pollard | Sound B Sim Coffee D McRae, M Whittet |
| 21 | Door Reader | H Paterson, L Vass B Sim | Sound J Balsillie Coffee S Davidson, J Lawrence |
| 28 | Door Reader | R Robertson, K Smith R Robertson | Sound D Hunter Coffee S Melville, C Swankie |
| AUGUST | | | |
| 4 | Door Reader | H McCartney, C Pollard R Marshall | Sound L Anderson Coffee D Blacklaw, D Dart |
| 11 | Door Reader | J Macdonald, M Marshall J Macdonald | Sound R Marshall Coffee J Houghton, D McRae |
| 18 | Door Reader | R Duncan, D Blacklaw H Paterson | Sound D Macdonald Coffee M Arthur, C Balsillie |
| 25 | Door Reader | D McRae, C Balsillie D McRae | Sound B Sim Coffee S Davidson, J Lawrence |

YOUR MONTHLY DIARY OF EVENTS

KILWHANG RINGERS

We have been very busy these past few weeks, getting ready for our Annual Coffee morning which was held on Saturday 18th May. It was a lovely morning, with tables all full and a great buzz in the hall. We had a few stalls, which were busy with browsers and the bells performed twice during the morning. Our two new bells, which were funded by a grant from the Meikle Carewe Wind farm, were in attendance, and thanks go to the Rev Mary Jepp who blessed them for us. A very successful morning was had, and we are sitting at over £800, which is wonderful. This will enable us to buy new music, or even a new bell!

No time for a rest, as we were invited to play on Tuesday 21st May at Fetteresso for the Focus group's Strawberry tea, which was lovely.

We have a break for the summer but have another outing to Macdonald /Carnegie Court and we are playing at the Carron to Mumbai during the summer months-just to keep us busy. We will return to our weekly practices on Monday 26th August at 10am in St Bridget's.

If you would like to join our group, or just come to listen, please get in touch.

Contact: Deb Blacklaw, 07796 173 864

THE CRAFT GROUP

The Craft Group is now on its summer break. Our last meeting was on 29th May when we had lunch at the Villa.

The group will meet again in September, (watch this space for date and time). We wish you all a restful, sunny summer.

Contact: May Arthur 07786 607633

BOWLING

The indoor bowling has stopped over the summer. We will start up on Tuesday 24th September at 2pm.

Contact: Allan Cairnduff, 763 387
email amcairnduff777 @ gmail.com

STONEHAVEN GUILDS

The Guild meets every two weeks from September to March at 2pm in Fetteresso Church Hall. They are now on their summer break .. look out for details of meetings in the first magazine after the summer.

Contact: Joan Macdonald, 760 471

*Dear God
may we look backward with gratitude,*

YOUR MONTHLY DIARY OF EVENTS

THE LUNCH BUNCH

Our next lunch will be on Friday 7th June, starting at 12.30pm in St Bridget's hall. We offer a choice of three soups, three hot puddings, a choice of cold sweets and tea and coffee, for the cost of only £5.00. Everyone is welcome to join us at this time, and this will be the last one for this term, as we don't meet in July and August to let the kitchen team have a rest over the summer. However, we will be back again on Friday 6th September at 12.30pm.

We would like to thank everyone for their support the last few months and look forward to seeing you on 7th June. If you need any more information, please get in touch.

Contact: Deb Blacklaw, 07796 173 864

CAFÉ CARRONSIDE

Café Carronside is our weekly get together for coffee/tea, fine pieces and a blether and is open to all. We meet in St Bridget's hall on a Thursday morning from 10-11.30am and welcome anyone who would like to join us. We are pleased to welcome our friends from Mowatt Court, on a regular basis, and enjoy their company at this time.

We recently held a donations morning for Christian Aid, and raised over £150.00, which has now been sent to them.

We will meet until the 27th June, when we will have a break for the summer to allow all the wonderful bakers and volunteers to hang up their "pinnies" and enjoy a rest. We will resume on Thursday 22nd August at 10am and look forward to seeing everyone again. Until then, we thank you for your continued support and wish you all a lovely summer- hopefully with some sun too! If you could spare some time to come and help with the cafe, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Contact: Deb Blacklaw, 07796 173 864

CAFÉ CARRONSIDE ROTA FOR JUNE

| JUNE | coffee | kitchen | serve / bake | serve |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 6 | Sam | Allan Janice | Jean | Carol |
| 13 | Deb | Allan Jennifer | Carol | Stella |
| 20 | Deb | Allan Jennifer | Diane | Sandra |
| 27 | Deb | Allan Jennifer | Joyce | Janice |

YOUR MONTHLY DIARY OF EVENTS

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Bible Study group continues to meet in St. Bridget's on Mondays during June from 2pm - 3pm. We have finished the Gospel of John. We are going to be studying the book of Ruth next. We will take a break in July and August and resume on Monday 2nd September.

Contact: Rev Sarah Smith, 762 166



SUMMER SALE AND COFFEE MORNING St BRIDGET'S SATURDAY 31st AUGUST 10 am to 12 noon.

Make a note of the date and time in your diary. Come along and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and some home bakes before browsing round the stalls which will include Books, trails, the popular £1 stall, a Match the Number stall and a Silent Auction.

Please look out donations for the stalls.

All the money raised will go to help church funds so we look forward to welcoming you and making the Treasurer happy!

If you have any donations, you can hand them in at St Bridget's on Friday 30th between 6.30pm and 8pm and on Saturday 31st between 8am and 9.30am.

MAKE SURE YOU COME ALONG TO THE EVENT!

STOP PRESS: "EVERYTHING STOPS FOR TEA"
AFTERNOON TEA PARTY ON SATURDAY 22nd JUNE AT 2PM.
"The Stonehaven Chorus" are to be hosting another of their excellent afternoon teas and invite you all to join them.
"Tea shall be served at 2pm". However, St.Bridget's doors will be open for entry from 1.30pm.The afternoon promises to provide fun, entertainment all accompanied by delicious food and copious amounts of tea or coffee. You do not want to miss it, so order your tickets soon. Ticket price is £12.50 . Please bring some cash along for the Raffle, Bottle Stall, etc. Tickets are available from "Chorus" Members, "Guilianotti's" on Evan Street, or contact Evelyn Watt, by phone / text / WhatsApp on 07909 111515. This is a fund-raising event for the Stonehaven Chorus musical tour to Hungary at the end of September. We hope to see you there! ☐

ROYAL VISIT TO STONEHAVEN

STONEHAVEN OPEN AIR SWIMMING POOL

Roberta Duncan writes:

On a lovely summer's day Her Royal Highness Princess Anne visited the Open-air pool on Monday 13th May to mark the 90 years since the pool opened in 1934. She visited the boiler room and pump room to see all the background workings.

Princess Anne then went on to speak to the groups selected to meet her including myself. She was interested to find out that my sister Margaret was one of the first little people in the pool when it opened in 1934 at the age of six years old. She was also surprised that in earlier times the pool was not heated.

Before the Princess left she said she had enjoyed her visit and unveiled a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion.

SEA CADETS UNIT

After the visit to the Open-Air pool, HRH The Princess Royal, as Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps, officially inaugurated the new Stonehaven Sea Cadets Unit premises at the town's harbour.

Deb Blacklaw writes:

The planning started in January this year for the visit of HRH Princess Anne to officially open the new Sea Cadet Unit and celebrate their 70th anniversary.

The weeks before the visit were spent tidying up the unit, badges were sewn on uniforms, boots brought up to the highest standard, jackets, white fronts and trousers all being pressed to perfection, caps being scrubbed, and everything ready for this momentous day in the calendar.

The weekend of the visit, the cadets were put through a day of drill and marching, which was tiring just watching them!!

In the background, the hall at St Bridget's was set up as "Sandwich Central", where we made 150 grab bags containing a sandwich, fruit, crisps, biscuit and juice for the cadets' lunch. The morning of the Parade day was spent making a buffet lunch for His Majesty's Royal Marine Band, who arrived to lead the parade and more sandwiches to take to the staff at the unit.

The afternoon was a wonderful show. Princess Anne arrived to the cheers of some of the children from Dunnottar Primary. She then took the Royal salute, and after some speeches, was taken on a tour of the Unit, accompanied by Lt Cdr Michael Blacklaw, where she met with different groups of people, and cut a celebratory cake. She then came back outside for the unveiling of the plaque, to mark the opening of the new Unit.

The event was attended by over 300 cadets, parents, volunteers and supporters of the unit, who were all invited to have afternoon tea following the visit, making it a special day for everyone involved.

SESSION SNIPPETS

SESSION SNIPPETS – June - August 24

Last month I wrote "Session is looking for help on the Finance front under the following headings:

1. Bookkeeping using Xero software
2. Management Accounts – using budget headings to produce reports.
3. Payroll Management & contact with HMRC
4. Gift Aid Management

ARH Accountants will carry out these functions but we need some assistance here. You don't need to be an Elder for this, **or even a member of the congregation** – just keen to help!" We seriously need your help – if you can't do any of these but know somebody who might, please contact myself in the first instance.

The same plea goes out for anyone able to take over the Safeguarding Coordinator's role from David Macdonald. Presbytery has training for these posts and this can be arranged. This is a very important role in the Church of Scotland, but not onerous, so please consider helping your church!

In June we note two important events – the fifth anniversary of the creation of Stonehaven Carronside and the third anniversary of the induction of Sarah as our minister. Time flies!

As mentioned in church, we have a new Presbytery Clerk who takes up her duties in July. The Rev Stella Campbell, the current Moderator of Presbytery, is demitting her charge at Kingshill to become our new Presbytery Clerk – a full time role in the new set up. Best wishes to Stella.

Session met on 22nd May with Elder Moderator David Macdonald in the chair – Sarah being on compassionate leave. We've started looking at forming some new districts to reflect the extended Carronside boundaries, starting with Stonehaven itself. Retired postie, Donald McRae, has been a great help in allocating the streets to district areas. At some point, we will also carry out a review of the Communion Roll to determine how accurate, or otherwise, our records are. We've already found errors just in Donald's allocations, so bear with us meantime. Advising change of addresses to the Church may not be high on people's priority list!

We're struggling to get the St Bridget's boundary wall damage repaired with builders very busy or not interested in the work. If you are able as a builder, or know of somebody, let David Macdonald know! It stood peacefully protecting the boundary since 1888 – until the last few months.

SESSION SNIPPETS continued/QUIZZES

Please support the Church during the summer months, especially the Sale in August. St Bridget's will be used as a Polling Station on 4th July. Enjoy our summer.

**Brian Sim, Session Clerk tel 01569 762038;
email bsim84@gmail.com**

QUIZZES

MAY QUIZ

"Dingbats"

Congratulations to our winner, Isobel Stephen. A prize is on its way.

The answers are:

1 Head over heels, 2 Add insult to injury, 3 Double trouble, 4 Banana Split, 5 Travel overseas, 6 Lemonade, 7 Broken Link, 8 A man for all seasons, 9 Dr Dolittle, 10 First and Foremost, 11 The seven seas' 12 Big bad wolf, 13 Scrambled eggs, 14 The short end of the stick, 15 Sunny side up, 16 All roads lead to Rome, 17 A drop in the ocean, 18 Three Wise men, 19 An eye for an eye, 20 20,000 leagues under the sea

SUMMER QUIZ

A longer quiz to cover the three summer months. All the answers in the summer quiz end in -ion. We have given you the first word of the answer to help you find the word that means the same as the one in the clue. Answers to one of the Editorial team by Wednesday 21st August please.

POUNDS, SHILLINGS AND PENCE

Two farthings would make a ha'penny
Two ha'pennies a penny for you
Three pennies would come to threepence
or a threepenny bit as we knew
Six pennies would make up sixpence
Two threepenny bits did as well
All were known as a tanner
As any old timer would tell.
Twelve pennies were worth one shilling
Four threepenny bits, two tanners - a bob
Four tanners, eight threepenny bits, two shillings
All would make a florin job.
Two and six or a florin and sixpence
Would then become half a crown
Four half-crowns made a ten bob note
Two ten bob notes a pound
A pound note and a shilling into a guinea grew
This is old money-pounds, shillings and pence
I remember it well..do you?

WALKING THE WEST HIGHLAND WAY

Our Minister Sarah writes:

There is so much I could say about doing the West Highland Way. It was an amazing adventure, which I am so glad I did. I was quite grateful and lucky with the weather for the whole thing. It wasn't too hot. There were a couple of times that there was a tiny bit of rain, but nothing that lasted more than a few minutes. I met so many people from many different places in the world, including Germany, Belgium, Canada, the States, Israel, and England.

Each day presented its own challenges. Day One included getting almost stuck knee deep in a bog and coming out covered with mud on my leggings and shoes, but thankfully the guest house I was at offered to wash my leggings and socks and the mud dried on my boots and I was able to brush it off. I enjoyed playing UNO with two girls from Germany and was introduced to their rules, which made the game more fun.

Day Two was hiking up Conic Hill. As I started the walk up, I took a break and chatted with two guys from Belgium about the importance of taking time while doing this to enjoy the beauty and experience of this adventure. I made sure to continue to do this throughout the rest of the whole time. The views at the top of Conic Hill were absolutely amazing. There were many undulations that day, and I was so grateful to see the hotel I was staying at that night.

The next day was the most technical day hiking next to Loch Lomond. I took the high road, as I was told that it was a better road to take. It was just as scenic, and after having heard how challenging the low road was, I was quite grateful for my choice. This was a day of dealing with boulders, trees and tree roots and making sure to not fall. The end of that day was well received.

Day Four was the halfway point, and another lovely day. I walked the second half of the day with a girl who is a university student in Germany. I experienced the kindness and generosity of people that day. It was great to see how language is not a barrier to showing each other kindness.

The next day was my longest day, 19 miles, but one of the most gorgeous days walking through Glen Coe and Rannoch Moor. I was grateful for the three people I walked with the whole time. It made an already great day even better.

Day 6 was my shortest day, but still with its challenges with the Devil's Staircase, and one of the most gruelling down hills on gravel. I was so grateful to reach the village, and for a lot of time to reflect and relax before the final day.

Day 7 came so quickly. I enjoyed speaking with more people going up the last big hill, including a mother and daughter from Germany. I was both ready and not ready for this to end. Reaching the end was bittersweet. I was grateful to not have to lace up my boots the next day. but I will miss the experiences of this walk.

A BIT OF A BLOG

Rev David T. Lewicki ,who stayed in Stonehaven for 2 weeks and led worship on two Sundays , writes an online blog and I obtained his permission to extract some of it - the Stonehaven section for the magazine.

What a marvellous time I've had in Stonehaven. A huge note of gratitude to Rev. Sarah Smith for letting me stay in her manse while I've been here. It's been a sanctuary of quiet for writing. I've completed drafts of 2 out of the 3 essays I hoped to write during this month!

I left Atlanta at 3:30pm on a Tuesday, flew overnight to Amsterdam, caught the short flight to Glasgow that arrived about 8:30am local time, took a bus to Queen Street station, hopped on a train that trundled across Scotland to Montrose, switched trains at Montrose, exited soon after at Stonehaven station. The taxi dropped me off at the manse of the church in Stonehaven. The church is just outside of town a short way up a hill and next to a nature preserve. I walked in, put my bags down, unpacked all of my clothes into the dresser, fed the resident cat, and sat down. It was 1:30pm local time. I had absolutely no idea internally what time it is, nor how long I was in motion.

Flying is a miraculous and terrifying event. How is it that we wake up on one part of the earth, jump into a metal tube that hurls through the atmosphere and descends through the very middle of meringue clouds, get out, and go to sleep in an entirely other land and culture? Miracle

I nursed myself back to relative strength on Saturday and into Sunday. Which is good, because part of the whole reason I'm here is to lead worship for my friend and former NDPC intern, the Rev. Sarah Smith, who currently serves as the pastor of the Stonehaven Carronside Church in the Church of Scotland. Here's one of the church volunteers calling the community to worship by ringing the church bell--no sissified electronic bells in Scotland, bruh.

The congregation is small--about 50 or so in worship. But they couldn't have been nicer to me. They made me feel welcome from the start, abided by the fact that I really didn't know the order of service well, and they seemed to be able to understand me despite my outrageous American accent. I even got a lovely lunch invitation after worship for quiche. I preached on Matthew's story of the Canaanite woman confronting Jesus and used the story to explore how we human beings think about boundaries, difference, and morality. It's hands-down one of the best stories in the Gospels.

The church in Stonehaven, as is true all over Scotland, has had to do some hard consolidating because of shrinking numbers. The congregation meets in a church building about two miles up the hill. There's a historic cemetery around the church which is quite lovely and brings some serious gravitas. Even though the Stonehaven Carronside church is only 2 miles from town, it feels like a village church.

A BIT OF A BLOG continued

And religion? Well, I've still got hope for the Church of Scotland. Stonehaven's congregation is small but solid. They are good stewards of their buildings. They do need more people to drive ministries, and, like so many congregations, it would be great if those people were a bit younger than the wonderful people worshipping there now.

The people of Stonehaven seemed a little shell-shocked by a long, cold, wet winter, and I'm quite sure that the timing of my visit in full-on spring buoyed my opinion of the town. I did see so many people out and about, enjoying the sun. On a bright Saturday, even though the temperature barely topped 60, children and adults were wading into the ocean--and they seemed happy about it. There were three different touch rugby games being played by adult men on the fields of the local school. Everywhere I went, people were walking, biking, getting outside.

I'll carry so many memories of Stonehaven with me. But none stronger than this: walking along a quiet lane, the cathedral of tree canopy arching overhead, and just off the path, the sound--the sound!--of water falling on stone.

Just living in Stonehaven, with the ability to walk around, look at things, talk to people, has been wonderfully nourishing in this sense. Stonehaven is a beautiful small town. Geographically, and in terms of its natural features, it's hard to find a place more lovely. This "seeing" our home in a wider perspective, I think, is also deeply humanizing--it makes you feel small, but paradoxically, like you also belong to a larger whole.

I'm grateful for the wonderful hospitality I received in Stonehaven!

WORLD MISSION

INDIA VILLAGE MINISTRIES

Suresh writes:

We help more people than you will ever know through various ministries: Assisting poor widows, house construction assistance, medical care and most importantly – support to poor children with their education. We have blessed many village pastors and evangelists who change people's lives for eternity. As the summer has started in India, the temperatures are ranging around 38C now and it may reach 47C in the coming month. Air coolers are of great help to congregations.

Swithin is visiting us in India for a few weeks and it is so nice to have him with family & IVM family. He will be returning to Canada on April 20. He is eagerly waiting to be promoted as a First Officer. Thank you so much for reaching out with your prayers and your gifts over the last financial year. May our Lord bless each of you abundantly as you have blessed so many others by your generosity.

*We continue to support the work of IVM through the "wee hoosies".
You can visit one us at the church and at St. Bridget's. Come fall*

PROPERTY REPORT

PROPERTY

We frequently receive compliments on how good our buildings look, inside and outside. Keeping our buildings in good condition does not happen by accident. It happens because our members and the members of the wider community in Stonehaven show how much they care by treating them with respect. It also happens because so many people report damage or wear and tear to me as soon as they become aware of it. Please keep up the good work of making these reports!

These repairs all cost money, and this is part of what our offerings, donations and fundraisers pay for.

For bills that are too large for this, such as the roof repairs at Dunnottar a few years ago and the South Church roof more recently, and for the refurbishment of the Manse during the vacancy, we were able to access funds that we hold in the Church of Scotland's Consolidated Fabric Fund. When a Church building is sold, the proceeds are invested in this fund on our behalf. We can only use these funds for repairs or improvements to our buildings. We have to submit our plans and the estimated costs to Presbytery and can only start work after Presbytery has approved.

It would be great if you could spare some time to assist with any of the tasks involved with either the "bread and butter" or the "big ticket" property issues.

David Macdonald, Property Convener

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DID YOU KNOW?

Copper doorknobs are self-disinfecting.

Copper and its alloys, like brass, have natural anti-bacterial properties as their ions disrupt protein chains.

Dolphins have names for each other and can call out for specific individuals.

Information in your brain travels at an impressive 268mph.

Bananas glow an intense blue under UV light, due to the degradation of chlorophyll as the fruit ripens.

In 1640, the church ruled against traditional May Day fertility celebrations as, "debauchery" and Parliament banned them as immoral!

A WEE SMILE

At an airline counter, little Peter who was with his mother told the check-in person that he was two years old. The man looked at him suspiciously and asked, "Do you know what happens to little boys who lie?"

"Yes. They get to fly at half price."

A small plane with an instructor and student on board hit the runway and bounced repeatedly until it came to a stop.

The Instructor turned to the student and said, "That was a very bad landing you just made."

"Me?" replied the student. "I thought *you* were landing."

A young couple invited their elderly minister for Sunday dinner. While they were in the kitchen preparing the meal, the minister asked their son Hamish what they were having to eat. "Goat" replied Hamish. "Goat?" replied the startled man of the cloth. "Are you sure about that?"

"Yep" said Hamish. "I heard Dad say to Mum, 'Might as well have the old goat for dinner today as any other day'".

Jim was planning his next holiday and phoned a seaside hotel to ask where it was. "It's only a stone's throw from the beach," he was told. "How will I recognise it?" asked Jim. Back came the reply, "It's the one with the broken windows."

The prisoner was aware that all prison mail is checked before it is sent. He got a letter from his wife asking about the family garden "When do I plant potatoes?". He wrote back "Do not under any circumstances dig up the place we used to plant them. That's where I hid the money I stole".

Within days his wife wrote back, "Six policemen came to the house. They dug up every square inch of the back garden. "By return, she got his answer, "Now is the time to plant the potatoes."

Thomas Edison spent years trying to invent electric light, testing and retesting. Finally late one night, he got the bulb to glow. He ran out of the laboratory, through the house and up the stairs to his bedroom. "Darling," Edison called to his wife. "I have done it!" "She rolled over and said, "Will you put that light out and come to bed!"

A man was married to the worst cook in the world. One evening he came home from work to find her in floods of tears.

"It's a disaster," she wailed. "The cat has eaten your dinner."

"Never mind," said the husband. "I will buy you a new cat."

A tourist was being led through the swamps in Florida. "Is it true," he asked the guide "that an alligator won't attack you if you carry a flashlight?"

"That depends" replied the guide "on how fast you carry the flashlight!"

PRAYERS

LORD GOD, MAY YOU GUIDE ME

As I wake each morning,
Lord God, may you guide me
through my day.

As I live each moment,
Lord God, fill my life with your
loving care.

As I make choices each day,
Lord God, strengthen
my resolution.

As I face difficult times,
Lord God, may your light heal my
brokenness.

As I meet others,
Lord God, may your unconditional
love flow through me.

In your mercy and with your
loving, healing grace,
may my life reflect your
everlasting love.

Amen.

THANK YOU, LORD.

I thank you, Lord,
For blessings and for favours
Bestowed on me this day.

I praise you, Lord,
For joys and inspirations
Received along the way.

Amen.

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SOME USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| MINISTER | Rev Sarah Smith | 762 166 manse |
| SESSION CLERK | Mr Brian Sim | 762 038 |
| ORGANIST | Contact through Mrs Ros Marshall | 762 813 |
| ROLL KEEPER | contact through Session Clerk | |
| HALL BOOKINGS | Mrs Hazel McCartney | 07748 270132 |
| FINANCE | contact through Session Clerk | |
| PROPERTY | Mr David Macdonald | 764 750 |
| SAFEGUARDING | Mr David Macdonald | 764 750 |
| LIFE & WORK | Mrs Margaret Ross | 763 316 |
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