

Lindores Litanies

1st Jan 2023



The Newsletter of
Lindores Parish Churches
of
Newburgh and Abdie and Dunbog



Gate of the Year

by Minnie Louise Haskins:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way".

Dear Friends,

Here we are in 2023, and I wish you all a good one. However we are reporting in this newsletter on our activities during November and December—and what a wide range indeed! Perhaps the acts of remembrance throw a special light on the joyful anticipations and celebrations of Christmas. I hope you all had blessings aplenty over the Christmas period, as did I. As for the new year and what it will hold? Who knows? We're starting off with a sense of national and international anxiety in terms of the war in Ukraine and the many challenges to peaceful life at home.

Minnie Louise Haskins' poem was read out at the New Year's service in Abdie on January 1st, after lighting the candle for Hope. It is partially replicated above, and was written in 1908 but best known through King George VI's Christmas broadcast in 1939—at the start of WW2. Britain at that time was experiencing

a 'Phoney War': after Hitler's invasion of Poland and the declaration of war by the Allies, nothing much else was happening on the war front. But there was a sense of foreboding. Much as we now feel, with Putin's plans unknown and seemingly unpredictable.

The poem was included in an anthology published on our late Queen's 90th birthday—entitled 'The Servant Queen and the King she Serves'. In that volume, the Queen discussed her Christian beliefs and what they meant for the way she led her life.

There is much to be sombre about; but also much reason for hope. That hope allows us to be joyful in the midst of uncertainty— even singing impromptu carols on a dark winter's night along Newburgh High Street. Fourteen of us were accompanied on flute by Matt who plays at our Taizé services. Many people have commented on how they enjoyed hearing us; and we enjoyed singing to them.

Wishing you good hope for 2023,

Valerie



Our primary school teachers make a special effort at the time of Armistice to help the children understand why our country went to war in the 20th century, and what it meant for those who were left behind. We are glad to be able to support them in this by hosting a school service on the Friday before Armistice. On that occasion, Richard from P5/6 volunteered to read the Kohima epitaph (**When you go home, tell them of us and say: For your tomorrow, we gave our today**). This is a challenging reading for a young child, but Richard did it beautifully, with gravity and balance. Several weeks later at one of the nativity services, he told Valerie that he still remembered that service, and recited the epitaph from memory, saying he would never forget it.

Some of P7 from Newburgh walked up the High Street to join in the Friday service at the war memorial; their presence a poignant reminder for us all of the costs of war. Local musician James Ford played the last post at the war memorial on both the Friday and Sunday morning services; and afterwards on Sunday, a service was held at the United Reformed Church.

The choir sang (in Italian) a beautiful piece, 'Nella Fantasia'. This was led by one of our organists, Kirsteen— no small feat as she had dislocated a tendon in her finger. Even so—the music was great, and worthy of the occasion, with a wonderful flute accompaniment by Matt.



The Battle of Kohima was the turning point of the Japanese offensive into India in 1944.

It claimed the lives of thousands of men on both sides, and was fought around the town of Kohima in Nagaland between April and June 1944.

By the time the battles were done, more than 4,000 British soldiers had died, together with 7,000 Japanese forces.



Nella Fantasia (In My Fantasy) is a song sung in Italian based on the theme "Gabriel's Oboe" from the film *The Mission* (1986). With music by composer Ennio Morricone and lyrics by Chiara Ferrà, Nella Fantasia was originally released in 1998 by Sarah Brightman, and has since been covered by many artists.

Translation: 'In my imagination I see a just world where all live in peace and honesty'



These little palm-sized crosses were made from the beautiful pitch pine of our old Newburgh pews—you may well remember sitting in them week after week, some of you for years, some of you for decades. The pews were 115 years old at the time of dismantling, and the wood would have been well seasoned even before it reached our church.

We want to make something meaningful out of the wood, and a generous local woodturner, who wishes to remain anonymous, has shown us some options. Please give us your ideas—now is the time for suggestions. The wood is in excellent condition, and below, we have a customised 4' pew which would look great in many settings. Each one made will have an appropriate dedication, acknowledging its source in the life of our church and people.

If you would like to order a bespoke pew, sized to your requirements, please address enquiries to Valerie; the little wooden crosses (about 2.5") are available for sale at the Red Fox Studio for £5.

A seasonal service of remembrance was held in Newburgh church on 11th December, following our annual tradition.

This peaceful service offered an opportunity for those missing loved ones to take some quiet time remembering them, before the hectic festive season cranked fully into gear. We sent invitations to those for whom we had recently conducted the funerals of their loved ones or were otherwise known to us.

During the service, Valerie invited people to write a message, or the name of their loved one, on a gold star and hang it on the Christmas tree; and also to light a candle (see picture below). Every time the tree's fairy lights were switched on throughout the Christmas season, these stars would twinkle, reflecting back the love with which our family and friends had been remembered.



On Sunday afternoon, 18th December, a group of children, mainly from Dunbog Primary School, and their parents went carol singing. They were continuing an old tradition – carolling around Luthrie and Brunton and finishing up in Abdie hall for mince pies.

The singing was accompanied by Jonathan Falla on guitar and Claudia Fleck on accordion, and a merry and joyful sound was enjoyed by all.



The above window in the East transept of Newburgh Church had clear glass panes until recently; then Bernie Duncan and Marian Thomas decided to paint it, and have created this beautiful Celtic cross. Since it has turned out so well, they will now paint the corresponding window in the West transept.

Travelling from East to West is highly symbolic at this time of year, as it echoes the journey of the Magi as they followed the star to find the infant king in Bethlehem. This must have been a long and hazardous journey with many discomforts; many of you will be familiar with TS Eliot's insightful poem, which begins:

*'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'*

[Journey of the Magi - Poetry Archive](#)



The other photo, above right, comes from the Ukraine, where Abernethy woman Martha Aitken has set up her lunch service. The photo shows a mountain of pasta, all bagged up and ready for distribution. You will remember Martha from last month's newsletters and her talks in church, and many of you donated to this cause. Since then she has driven her truck back to the Ukraine, overland West to East, and as planned, has recruited local people to prepare and deliver hot lunches twice a week in three separate villages, over a three-month period. She is very grateful for the shoe boxes we gave her, and has let us know that these brought huge joy in the midst of some bleak situations.

Martha's donation page is still open at [Fundraiser by Martha Aitken : Project Soups - Ukraine \(gofundme.com\)](#) and donations will continue to be welcome.



On 10th December we held our annual CHRISTMAS WINDOWS event at Newburgh Church. This was organised by Kirsty McLelland, who chose the theme for this year— 'Stories that Jesus would have heard when he was a child.' This theme obviously gave lots of scope because the window displays were magnificent, colourful and imaginative. Space allows only three photos to be reproduced here, but they were all excellent.

TOP: Noah's Ark, with two of everything, by Knit and Natter.
 MIDDLE: The Tower of Babel, by P7 at Newburgh Primary School.
 BOTTOM: Moses and the Burning Bush, by the URC.



Other displays were as follows:

- Foyer, chancel flowers - Pat Dalrymple
- Friends of Ukraine - Elaine Clunie
- Daniel in the lions den - Eleanor Lyall
- Josephs coat of many colours - Jill Hayward and Elspeth Gibb
- Parting of the red sea - Pat Dalrymple
- Adam and Eve - Scott Ramsey
- Elijah and the Chariot of Fire - Clare Doig
- The ten commandments - Marian Thomas and Bernie Duncan
- Jacobs ladder - Linsey Adams
- The creation - Dagmar Dawson and Kirsty McLellan
- Flowers (no theme) Elspeth Gibb
- Jonah and the whale - Elaine Clunie
- Moses in the rushes - Sally Smith



There was tea and a raffle. Dave Burnett entertained with Christmas songs, Elaine Clunie recited some Christmas poems, and Helen Welsh read her short story of Fairy Fay. It was all very enjoyable.

Well done Kirsty and all who helped.



From top, clockwise: Children's nativity, with baby Ruby as infant Jesus; Nativity scene in church front garden, created by Angela Ellison, assisted by Paul Duncan, Marian Thomas, and Maureen Burgess; Practising the final song at dress rehearsal. Script by Russell Ferguson included characters from Vicar of Dibley, Allo Allo, Dad's Army and Yes Minister plus King Elvis and the faithful camel.



Following up on the spark of an idea to provide lunch for anyone who may be alone on Christmas Day, the **Lindores Parish Christmas Lunch** became a reality with twenty-two people seated in the Newburgh Church Hall. The lunch menu rivalled many a good restaurant (see below) provided by chefs Bernie Duncan, Marian Thomas, James Pentley, Natalie Wyles, Kirsty McLellan and Paul Duncan; with tasty home-made chocolates from Elspeth Gibb and Margaret Stark. Marian and Natalie kindly provided crackers, cards, music, a 'pass the parcel' and some gift bags. The cardboard aeroplanes proved very popular! Seeing everyone smiling and having fun was worth all the time in preparation and cooking and we achieved our aim of providing a wholesome meal and good company for all those who attended.



FESTIVE MENU

Welcome Canapés

Roast Turkey Breast with pork, sage & onion stuffing

Three Bird Roast, Venison Wellington, Roast Local Wild Goose, 'Pigs in blankets'

Vegetable Wellington (V), Sage and Onion stuffing balls (V & GF)

All the veggies; gravy, cranberry sauce

Apple Crumble and Custard

Chocolate Brownies

Tea and Coffee



Services and events in January and February

January

Sunday 1 st	Sunday Service, Abdie & Dunbog Church	10.30am
Sunday 8 th	Sunday Service, Newburgh Church	10.30am
Tuesday 10 th	Session meeting at Abdie & Dunbog Church	7pm
Wednesday 11 th	Wellbeing choir recommences, TICC	2pm
Sunday 15 th	Sunday Service, Abdie & Dunbog Church	10.30am
Sunday 22 nd	Joint Service in United Reformed church	11am
Sunday 29 th	Joint Cluster Service in Edenshead Church Auchtermuchty	TBC

February

Sunday 5 th	Sunday Service, Newburgh Church	10.30am
Sunday 12 th	Sunday Service, Abdie & Dunbog Church	10.30am
Sunday 19 th	Joint Service with URC Newburgh church	10.30am
Saturday 25 th	Snowdrop Open Gardens at Lindores House	TBC
Sunday 26 th	Sunday Service, Abdie & Dunbog Church	10.30am

If you wish to join Sunday Services by Zoom please contact Valerie for the Link

Valerie Walker's contact details are: lindoreschurch@gmail.com

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