

Focus

The Church Newsletter of Peterculter Parish Church
September 2021



FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends

It is a sign of things returning to some normality that we have issued this magazine, after keeping you up to date via newsletters. It has also been very encouraging to be able to sing again in worship (even with a face covering) and to see organisations beginning to start up again. It was great to be able to return to teas and coffees after the service and to enjoy some scones, very kindly donated by Neil Selbie, whom I would like to thank very much.

Things will not fully return to the way they were before and the past 18 months have had a major impact on the life of our congregation, along with many others. Sadly, both the Friendship Club and the Wednesday Club have had to end and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed so much to these groups over the years. I always enjoyed my annual visit to the Friendship Club, which has been in existence since Peterculter Church was formed. I have no doubt that those who attended it will miss the fellowship.

The majority of volunteers on Thursday and Saturday coffees duty have taken the decision to stand down. This is totally understandable, where people have been volunteering for many years and have had time during lockdown to think about whether or not to carry on. I would like to thank those who have given of their time and talents to serving the church in this way - the fellowship that has been provided has been so important, along with the considerable income generated. In particular, I would like to thank Alison Middler and Fiona Jones, who organised the Thursday and Saturday rotas for a number of years.

It is also the case that a number of people have not been worshipping on a Sunday due to Covid restrictions. As I have mentioned before, I do hope you will come back, especially once face coverings are no longer required! This also includes Young Church, which has not been able to meet for the past 18 months, but is now back.

All of these changes present big challenges, but what gives me encouragement is the fact that there are still a number of highly committed people who are willing and able to give so much of their time and talents to the work of our congregation. Without their support and commitment, I could not do this job as your minister. The encouragement that comes through faith and believing in the purpose of all that we seek to do in the name of Christ, makes such a big difference.

Your sincerely
John Ferguson

WORSHIP

- September 5th - Morning Worship, Dr Donald Wood
- September 12th - Morning Worship, Dr Donald Wood
- September 19th - Family Service, Boys Brigade Enrolment
- September 26th - Morning Worship, followed by Communion
- October 3rd - Family Service, Harvest Thanksgiving

Please note that the Sacrament of Communion will be held on Sunday October 31st.

STREAMING OF SERVICES

Don't forget that our services continue to livestream our own services each week on Facebook and these can then be found in our YouTube page: <https://youtube.com/user/CulterKirk>.

Thank you to Val Muir and Colin Jones for undertaking this every Sunday.

INSTANT NEIGHBOUR

Instant Neighbour is very short of tinned soup, baked beans and breakfast cereal.

Please note that as well as the Monday morning drop off from 11 am - 12noon, you can bring goods on a Sunday morning and leave them in the basket at the extension door.

FLOWERS

At last we seem to be returning to some sort of normal and our spirits are lifting. It was very heartening when we were allowed access to the church but with restricted numbers we kept the flower arrangements very low key. One of the most rewarding part of our duties is the response we get when delivering the flowers to members of the congregation and the smile they bring.

Unfortunately, during this time, two of our members have felt it was time for them to resign and we are very sorry to lose Margaret Carmichael and Sylvia Nicol. They have been a great asset to our team and they will be sorely missed. But, if you feel you would like to join us, we will be delighted to hear from you.

Meantime, thank you all for your support and contributions, especially Arthur Beattie and Stanley Stephen and Family.

Convener: Violet Smith
01224 733317

Treasurer: Mabel Taylor
01224 732030

COMMITTEE CONVENERS

Mrs Fiona Anderson has decided to resign as convener of the Youth Council. I would like to thank Fiona for convening the Council for many years. It has played an important role in bringing together the youth organisations, allowing ideas to be shared and ensuring better

communication. Fiona has done an excellent job.

Moira Connon has also decided to resign from convening the Care Team. As well as convening the meetings, Moira has organised Easter and Christmas cards to our more vulnerable members, as well as



the annual bus outing.

Thank you Moira for the quiet, efficient and very caring way in which you have undertaken this important work.

John Ferguson

NEW CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

It has been great to welcome our new church administrator, Mrs Katie Gillies. Katie, who grew up in Culter, has begun working in the office, but at the moment it remains closed, so you cannot pop in as yet due to Covid restrictions. However, hopefully it will not be long before it opens again. When it does so, the hours will be Tuesday and Friday from 10.00 am - 12noon.

I would like to express a big thank you to Donald Muir, Session Clerk, who has done a power of work in handling administrative matters during Margaret Bruce's furlough and the gap between Margaret's retiral and appointing a new Administrator.

John Ferguson

ABERDEEN WEST PARISH GROUPING

The Aberdeen West Parish Grouping was launched on Sunday August 29th at the final Aberdeen West Joint Service.

A Steering Committee has been formed to take the Grouping forward. Pictured below are the ministers from the five congregations, enjoying the first in person get together after many months of meeting by Zoom.



STUDENT PLACEMENT - DONALD WOOD

In Cecil B. Hartley's *The Gentlemen's Book of Etiquette and Manual of Politeness*—a book that, more than 150 years since its first appearance, still amuses and instructs—we encounter the following advice for American visitors to Europe: 'You may carry with you one rule into every country, which is, that, however much the inhabitants may object to your dress, language, or habits, they will cheerfully acknowledge that the American stranger is perfectly amiable and polite'.

As 'the American stranger' working and worshipping for a little while in this parish, I have been asked to write a few words by way of introduction.

In sitting down to do so, I am reminded of another of Hartley's exhortations: 'Speak of yourself but little. Your friends will find out your virtues without forcing you to tell them, and you may feel confident that it is equally unnecessary to expose your faults yourself.' So—letting my virtues (if any there be) and my faults (such as they are) speak for themselves—I will limit myself to a few very brief remarks.

Firstly, a word of appreciation and thanks: I count it a great privilege to be completing part of my training for Church of Scotland ministry here in Peterculter. It is a part of the world I knew previously only in passing, and it's been a delight to get to know it a bit better. Over the past several weeks, as I have begun to participate in Sunday services and to visit members of the congregation, I have found it to be a vibrant and friendly church and parish, and I am grateful for the welcome I have received here.

I have arrived here having already travelled a reasonably long and varied way along life's path. I was raised in Southern California and in Japan, and I first came to know life in the United Kingdom when completing my post-graduate studies in England. Over the past two decades, much of my time has been dedicated to working as an academic theologian—most recently as a lecturer in systematic theology at the University of Aberdeen. That I now find myself training for full-time front-line ministry in the kirk remains a matter of some surprise and perplexity, but also of glad confidence in God's good and gracious direction. As the old slogan has it: all our lives unfold at the intersection of human confusion and divine providence.

My placement here in Peterculter will continue to the year's end, and I am looking forward to spending more time with you during the coming weeks and months, so that 'you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith' (Romans 1:12).



LIFE AND WORK

The September issue of Life and Work is now on sale at the door of the Church price £3. Members who have ordered their copy on a regular basis will receive this in the usual way. As church life is returning to some kind of normal, from October onwards the system for collecting the magazines will revert to the way this was done pre lockdown, i.e. if you have a pigeonhole you will find it there and if not, it will be left in the box at the extension door.

In this issue there is an article entitled "God has been guiding me". Jackie MacAdam learns about the faith and work of Dundee based parish nurse Barbara MacFarlane.

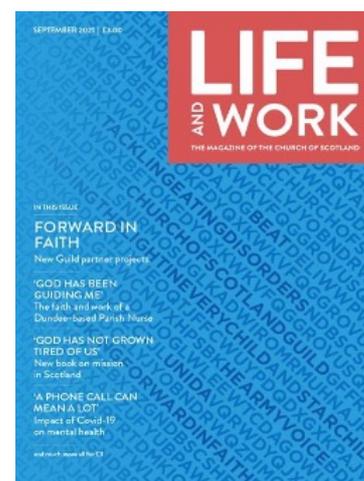
Special Offer

To celebrate Life and Work Sunday and support the magazine of the Church of Scotland we are offering new subscribers the choice of two money saving subscription offers.

Annual PRINT Subscription: Buy 12 issues for the price of 10 and pay ONLY £30. Purchase and save at www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe using promotion code LWS2021

Annual DIGITAL Subscription: Receive 34% OFF when you buy 12 issues and pay ONLY £13.99. Purchase and save at <https://pktmags.com/lwspromo>

Promotions valid until 30 September 2021.



WHAT'S ON

THURSDAY AND SATURDAY COFFEES



I am very grateful to Joyce Cowie who has put together a new team of just 6 people to undertake weekly Thursday coffees. We will see how this works out up until Christmas and whether we can sustain it with such a small number of volunteers is debatable. The coffees will run each Thursday from 10.00 am - 11.30 am and the Thursday midweek service will take place at 11.30 am.

With almost all of the Saturday Coffees volunteers standing down, I'm grateful to Edna Ledingham and Sheila Walker for organising a monthly Coffee Morning. The first of these will take place on **Sat 18th September** and then on **Sat 16th October**.

If you are able to volunteer to help with coffees, please contact myself or the church office. This also includes Sunday teas and coffees after the service.

John Ferguson

CHRISTIAN AID 'WALK THE LINE'

The Christian Aid 'Walk the Line' sponsored event will take place again this year on **Saturday 4th September**. You can give via www.justgiving.com/fundraising/OT542cultstoculter

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

This year, the MacMillan Coffee Morning will take place on a Saturday, instead of a Friday. It will be on **Saturday October 2nd** from 10am - 12noon. As always, home baking would be much appreciated and if you can serve on the day, please contact Fiona Jones on 01224 739076.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Bible Study Group will resume meetings in person from **Thursday 16th September** at 7.00 pm in the Small Hall. All are very welcome.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Funerals

13th July	Wilma Gillan, Balhousie Care Home
14th July	Colin Murison, Lewisvale
16th July	Charlie Tait, Eastleigh Care Home
4th August	Gordon Jamieson, Cornyhaugh Road,

Wedding

21st August	Judith Davidson and Steven Watson
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EMAIL CONTACT

If you wish to receive future newsletters via email and have not already supplied us with an email address, can you please email secretary@culterkirk.co.uk



CONTACT US

Minister:

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- sessionclerk@culterkirk.co.uk

Newsletter Editor:

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- 07766 740878
- editor@culterkirk.co.uk

Church Office:

- Katie Gillies
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- secretary@culterkirk.co.uk



CHURCH OFFICE

Please note that the church office remains closed to church members and the public.

CLOSED