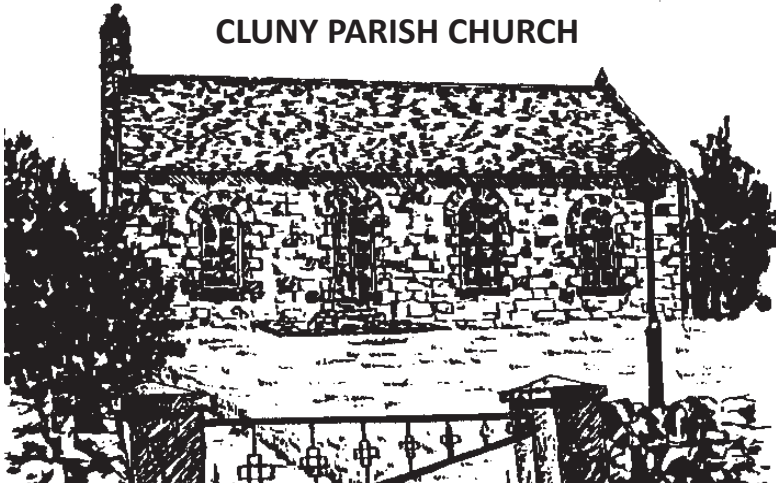


# CLUNY PARISH CHURCH



## Newsletter Number Fifty: April 2015

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### Times of Church Services

Sunday morning worship takes place at 11am in Cluny Church except for the joint services which are held at 10am on the first Sunday of the month and alternate between Monymusk (May) and Cluny (June) for the rest of the year. Joint services at 10am for all the Sundays in July will take place at Monymusk Church and at Cluny Church for all the Sundays in August. Members of Cluny Church are reminded that the minister's day off is Monday. It would be appreciated that, unless there is an emergency, contact should be made at any other time during the week.

[www.clunychurch.weebly.com](http://www.clunychurch.weebly.com)

## Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends

As March comes to a close I am delighted to report that my commitment to act as Interim Moderator at Inverurie St Andrews Church has come to an end. When the minister of that church died very suddenly on holiday in August of last year I decided that I would like to help this congregation using the experience that I have gained over more than 20 years of parish ministry together with 10 years as Presbytery Clerk. I did not in all honesty realise how busy I was going to become otherwise I might have thought twice about volunteering for this post. The work at Inverurie has been varied and I must say how welcoming the folk at St Andrews have been to me and my ministry. As this chapter is about to close it would be wrong of me not to thank the members and office bearers of Cluny Church for allowing me to do this as it did take away the time I had to be your parish minister. All going well I will be resuming my regular duties in the parish quite soon. Things change all the time and how we adapt to change can say much about us. I do not like change too much as I am comfy in my own little world. However the world continues to change at a rapid pace and the church is changing too. In May the General Assembly will debate whether homosexuals can be ordained as parish ministers allowing congregations to decide if they would want a homosexual as their minister. When I entered ministry this would never have been openly discussed yet alone voted on in the General Assembly. For the avoidance of any doubt and while I know this position may not please everyone I see no reason why a parish minister can't be a homosexual. When our Presbytery voted on this I voted in favour of allowing homosexuals to serve in the parish. That being said I honestly don't think this is as big a deal as many make out. Far more effort and energy has

gone into this debate over the last five or more years than was necessary. To my mind more energy should be spent on working to build up the church rather than to divide the church but that is a debate for another day.

I am writing this on the evening before the eclipse. They say it's something that you will remember for the rest of your life - but I can't recall the last one which the news tells me was in 1999. I will no doubt head out to see what I can observe without looking directly at the sun. The moon will come between the Earth and the sun and the light will be blocked out. What a metaphor that is for life today. What things block the light from the Son of God I ask myself constantly? But like the eclipse this year the light continues to shine and I thank God for his love to me.

One thing that never changes however is the love that God has for you and at Easter we see the full measure of that love when we celebrate and remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, because God so loved the world that he sent his only Son... I hope this finds you and your loved ones well and if you need a visit please don't hesitate to contact me

Your minister

Euan Glen

## **Parish Register**

### **Death**

Mr Jack Thomson, Sauchen on 10th February 2015

### **Baptism**

Amy Thomson on 14th December 2014

Lucy Craigmile on 29th March 2015

## **Dates and Times of Communion Services**

At the recent meeting of the Kirk Session it was agreed that the communion services for 2015 would take place on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April and Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November at 11am only. Discussion took place about continuing with the evening services but due to the low numbers participating in the 6.30pm services the Kirk Session agreed that these should now be stopped.

## **Pastoral Visiting**

Over the last few months life has been hectic for me as I looked after the congregation at Inverurie St Andrews. This service is now over. Over the last year or so quite a number of people have said to me either directly or indirectly that they did not want a visit because they knew how busy I was. Let me assure you that I will always make time to visit either at home or in hospital if there is a pastoral need. Please don't hesitate to ask or let me know. I do appreciate the thoughts behind not wanting to give me more to do, but pastoral work is my job. Please let me know if you are going into hospital or need a visit, I can assure you that I am not too busy for you.

*Euan Glen*

## Resignation of Scott Langlands as Treasurer

At the meeting of the Congregational Board in February Scott announced his intention to resign as treasurer of Cluny Church. The members of the Board received the news with sadness but also with appreciation of the hard work that he has carried out in the role of treasurer. Scott has held the post since October 2010 and has served the church well in those (nearly) five years. In his time he has digitalised the accounts, created spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations while maintaining accurate records so that we can say that he was “on the ball” as treasurer. We have been blessed in this congregation with many fine treasurers and Scott has certainly followed on in this tradition. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to him for all his work as treasurer and also for agreeing to carry on looking after the books until we can find a successor.

*Euan Glen*





## **Service to Church Music**

At the Christmas Candlelight Carol Service on Friday 19th December 2014 the congregation enjoyed another most enjoyable evening of choir singing and Christmas readings. The offering on the evening amounted to over £400 and was donated to the Ebola appeal.

As the service came to an end I had the pleasure and privilege on behalf of the congregation and the Church of Scotland to present to our organist and choir master Mr Sandy Argo a certificate signed by the Moderator of The General Assembly to mark over 60 years of service as organist in the Church of Scotland. I was honoured to recognise Sandy's service to the church during spells in Aberdeen and out here at Cluny and Monymusk. This is a tremendous service and I wonder what changes of worship styles he has had to cope with over these years. I know from experience that if I have suggested a new hymn or a different way to lead worship Sandy has always only been supportive and encouraging in dealing with my suggestions.

Many years ago I joined the choir to sing with them at Christmas. I know how much work and preparation that Sandy put into that service and I am sure that has been repeated over many years. The last couple of years have seen him also involved with the Children's Choir which I know he has enjoyed.

Sandy, on behalf of the congregation, many thanks for the years of service past and for the service to come. You are an example to us all for dedicated service to the church and even more so to Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Euan Glen*



## Fairtrade

The joint service at Monymusk Church held on Sunday 1st March was a most interesting and informative time of worship. It was led by Patricia Findlay and because the date fell within Fairtrade Fortnight she decided to take this as the focus of the service. The hymns and readings were chosen to reflect the themes of Fairtrade (better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers leading to social justice, equality and reduction of poverty) and case studies of the benefits of Fairtrade to real people in countries like Malawi were considered. Patricia asked the combined congregations if we would think about applying to be Fairtrade churches. After the service I looked up the requirements for this and on balance they are not too exacting. Here are the three goals:

- Use Fairtrade tea and coffee after services and in all meetings for which we have responsibility
- Move forward on using other Fairtrade products such as sugar, biscuits and fruit
- Promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight and during the year through events, worship and other activities whenever possible

Perhaps we could think about this seriously and try to achieve the goals and help to promote the laudable principles of Fairtrade here at Cluny Church.

*Ann Wilkinson*

## **How Great Thou Art**

This has always been my favourite hymn; so moving in fact that it reduces me to tears when we sing it. Glenda Fraser and I were inevitably fumbling for our hankies and exchanging sympathetic glances as we stood together in church on these occasions!

However I have never been more conscious of the truth of the statement “How Great Thou Art” as when I was on holiday in the USA last year. Standing in the sunshine in the Yosemite National Park watching the tiny climbers like ants on the sheer face of El Capitan, I felt my heart swell with admiration and astonishment at the devastating scale of the mountains and scenery which dwarfed us. Later we were disappointed when the helicopter trip over the Grand Canyon was cancelled due to rain and high winds but an alternative fixed wing flight was offered instead.

As we soared in a tiny plane over the vast chasms with their vivid colours- red, purple, blue, brown, we could not restrain our exclamations of absolute wonder at what was below us. O God, how great thou art indeed!

*Katie Robertson*



1. O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

*Chorus:*

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

2. When through the woods, and forest glades I wander  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.  
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur  
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.

*Chorus*

3. And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.

*Chorus*

4. When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.  
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,  
And there proclaim, "My God, how great Thou art!"

*Chorus*

## **Visit to the Holy Land (part two)**

*You will remember Sylvia's article about her trip to the Holy Land (part one) which appeared in the last edition of the newsletter. Here is the concluding part.*

For the second part of our trip we stayed in Tiberias in Galilee. Our hotel, The Ron Beach, was right by the side of the Sea of Galilee. Watching the water rippling the shore was very soothing. In my mind I remembered the stories I'd read in the Bible about the life of Jesus centred on that area, living and working with his disciples there.

We had the privilege of attending and participating in the communion service at the Church of Scotland in Tiberias. It is a small simple church where visitors from all countries can come and worship. When we arrived we were quite a big group (about 20) so the minister was very pleased to meet and talk with us. He was even happier when he discovered that one of our number was an accomplished organist. Quite often there is no one to play so the hymns are sung unaccompanied. We were joined by a Dutch group and a few others. Sometimes the church is nearly full as it was that night. Other times there may be hardly anyone. I was happy to help distribute the Communion wine and bread helped by other members of our group. Returning from church, we enjoyed dinner in the hotel.

The next day we travelled by bus and then transferred to taxis to visit the Basilica of the Transfiguration. By the time we alighted we were very high up the mountain. We looked out from the vantage points to enjoy the magnificent view over the plain of Armageddon. Being so high up we could visualize the clouds covering the mountain tops concealing Jesus as he turned shining

white. Returning to Tiberias we stopped at Cana at the place where Jesus performed his first miracle.

The next day we visited Nazareth, the childhood area of Jesus's life. An area there has been restored to a first century Galilean village. As we entered the village we passed some olive trees that had been there since the time of Jesus. The ground was rough and stony so we picked our way down to an area where an old shepherd was tending some sheep and goats. There certainly didn't look as if there was a lot for them to eat. Nearby was an old wine press set into the hillside.

Inside the old buildings some tradesmen and women were plying their trade. We saw some women spinning the wool and then using dyes from plants to colour the wool. On very basic looms they wove some cloth. The carpenter was busy making items for a family with very simple tools. We could imagine Jesus working there making perhaps a stool or a table for his family. We stopped at a blacksmith who was heating iron in a fire to make some tools. This area was quiet and peaceful. We felt that we could associate this place with what we have seen and read about in our bible stories.

The next day we set sail across the Sea of Galilee in a small boat. It was nerve racking at first, as we could not forget how the stories we had heard reminded us that a storm can whip up so quickly on that lovely, seemingly calm piece of water. Unfortunately we didn't have Jesus in person on the boat with us. We did however have the Reverend Nancy Jackson (our group leader) with us. As was the usual daily custom we sang, had a prayer and reading. It's not difficult to guess what our reading was that day.

As we got off the boat we saw the upturned hull of an ancient fishing boat. This would have been just the kind Jesus used when

fishing with his disciples. We visited the ruins of Capernaum where Jesus had his base in Galilee. We also went to Mensa Christi, the place where Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection. We celebrated Communion there on the shore where Jesus performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes. As at many other biblical locations there is a church built on the actual site. We enjoyed our lunch there in that memorable place. Our last visit for the day was a drive to the Convent of the Beatitudes. We visited the church and the garden which commemorates the Sermon on the Mount. Our trip ended by boarding the boat again to sail back across The Sea of Galilee.

Back at the hotel it was time to tidy our cases and get ready for flying home the next day. We left at 9.05 and arrived back at Heathrow at 13.35. There at Heathrow we bid farewell to the rest of the group who were flying home to Edinburgh, while we had to wait a little bit longer for the Aberdeen flight. We were lucky to have been attached to such a friendly group. Every one of them had treated us as if we were two of their own congregation.

Looking back over the trip we thought of the troubles that have afflicted that land. How lucky we were to visit at a time when we saw no bombs or fighting. How sad it was to see how much of the land is in ruins caused by so many wars. Sad it is too, to see a huge wall being built at this time to divide the land so that friends can't see friends and families are separated, depending where they live.

We enjoyed our trip, looking back at a way of life so long ago in Nazareth. The bible became more real to us but so did the evidence of war. My abiding thought still is why can't people live in peace and not at war. How lucky we are to live in this lovely part of rural Scotland.

*Sylvia Henry*

## Dates for your Diary



### **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May (Pentecost):**

Bacon rolls, teas and coffees will be served in Cluny Church hall from 10am onwards i.e. before the morning service at 11am.



### **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May:**

Monymusk Boules Masters to be held in the village square from 9am until 5.15pm.

Please visit the website if you want to find out more.

<http://www.monymuskboules.com/>

### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June:**

Plant Sale in Millbank Hall 10am until 12noon in aid of church funds. Teas and coffees available.



## **Church Flowers**

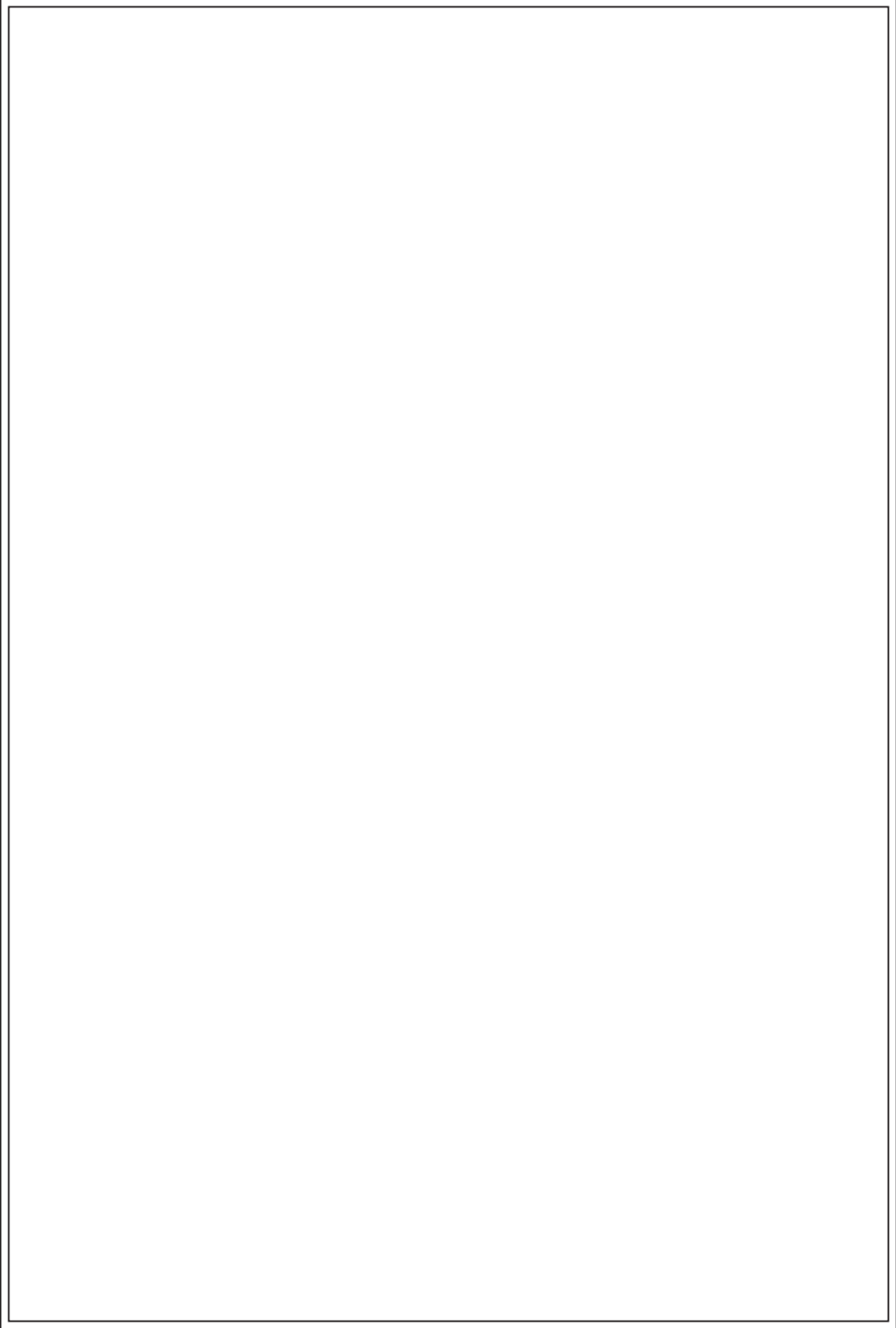
Mrs Betty Ross is the Flower Convener at Cluny Church and thanks are due to her for organising the rota and also to everyone who puts flowers in the church for the weekly services. Betty would be delighted to hear from anyone else who would like to do so. You can contact her on 01330 833591

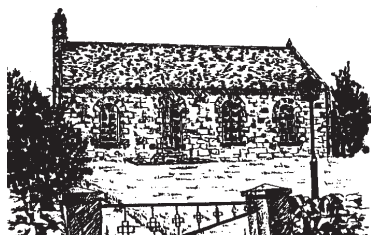
## **Church Website**

The minister has set up a website for Cluny Church and would appreciate any feedback. You can access it on [www.clunychurch.weebly.com](http://www.clunychurch.weebly.com) The site includes details of church life and a programme of events.

## **Newsletter**

Thanks are due to those who provide items for our twice yearly newsletter. We would be happy to receive further suggestions and items for inclusion in future editions. If you wish to add an item for the next newsletter e.g. advertising a local event or to tell people about a local organisation please contact either Euan or the editor.





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