

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING REPORTS



26th May 2019

Dear Friends,

In Scotland our forefathers were “just going to say” things about wee modest daisies, crimson-tipped flowers, mice and men, and lads and lassies, when up stepped this ploughman fae Ayrshire and he said it for us all. And ever since, the authorship of certain lines of Robert Burns have lain between him and the last ploughman who ever drove his plough-share through a field mouse's nest, or wearied for his bonnie Jean! Says the ploughman, “I saw the mouse myself, and felt wae for the wee cratur.” And he almost forgets the actual author, so obviously does Burns express what he himself was “just going to say”.

I am sure we all know the feeling. We may say, “I couldn't have said it better myself;” or “(s)he took the words right out of my mouth.” Well, that's the touch of nature that makes the whole world akin. But there's a touch of grace that makes the spiritual world akin. Says Charles Wesley,

Touched by an unction from above
Our eyes are opened to perceive
The mystery of redeeming love,
The death by which alone we live.

In *So send I you*, Oswald Chambers of Aberdeen writes, “When we speak of a call we nearly always leave out one essential feature, viz: the nature of the one who calls. We speak of the call of the sea, the call of the mountains, the call of the great ice-barriers. These calls are heard by a few only because the call is the expression of the nature from which the call comes, and can only be heard by those who are attuned to that nature.”

Attuned! Thomas Cranmer's Collect says, “Attune our ears to the voice of the Good Shepherd.” Says the hymnist,

Oh, may my heart in tune be found,
Like David's harp, of solemn sound!

Bob Dylan's English teacher BJ Rolfzen was standing with his protégé at a funeral of a mutual friend in Hibbing, Minnesota. Dylan put his arm around BJ and told BJ that he had taught him everything he knew. BJ had a humble background and had only trained to be a teacher after the Second World War, Hibbing High School being his only appointment. Yet evidently he had left his mark on Dylan. Perhaps he had helped to form Dylan, "attuning" his mind, his hand, and his eye together in a way that allowed him to do consciously what he unconsciously knew and felt, such that Johnny Cash could say of his friend:

This man can rhyme the tick of time,
The edge of pain, the what of sane
And comprehend the good in men, the bad in men
Can feel the hate of fight,
the love of right
And the creep of blight
at the speed of light...

Liner notes on 'Nashville Skyline' (1969)

I believe that many of my friends and colleagues at CTM and indeed around the Circuit have been "beyond all reckoning" in terms of my own "attuning" as a Christian disciple and Methodist minister. You have accepted me and given me space to grow and develop for which I am immensely grateful. My Welcome Service at St. John's Northgate Methodist Church, Gloucester is on Saturday 31 August, the day before you welcome James Garnett to Aberdeen. I am sure you will support James as he journeys with you into the future. My thoughts and prayers remain with you on all your endeavours for Christ.

I close with one of my favourite Psalms which will always remind me of Aberdeenshire and Morayshire, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help? My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1, 2).

With every fondest wish,

John

Minister's Report

This past year my attention was drawn to a book called *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* (Robert Schnase), these practices being radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking missions and service, and extravagant hospitality. We could call these the DNA of 'Normal Church Life'. At both Church Stewards and Church Council level these things have been given some consideration, prior to an Open Meeting in church in late November, just after a successful Church Weekend down at The Burn, which helped us to engage with the District Development Plan with its twin focus on biblical engagement and social action. Lots of creative ideas ensued as we considered ways to grow our Church, in terms of being more spiritually healthy, vital, and fruitful.

Toward that end some of the things I have been involved in this past year include running Lent, Baptismal and Membership classes; supporting Open Table and TakeTime along with our Afternoon Tea Parties each of which have proved to be very successful; attending Aberdeen City Council refugee and homeless meetings; having Sunday nights at the manse; supporting University Chaplaincy work; and organising Christmas and Easter events for Aberdeen Churches Together.

As a consequence to my period of sabbatical last year, I have also worked on an article with a view to publication exploring one part of Aberdeen's Spiritual Heritage in relation to George MacDonald of Huntly and his sisters relations in Aberdeen which was spiritually significant in its time but has largely been forgotten. Various opportunities to speak on this have arisen recently which the Lord Provost and the Pro-Chancellor of Aberdeen University have taken a keen interest in. On the back of that, some information on a former CTM member John Ogilvie has recently come to light which I plan to write a 500 word article on for the *P&J* this Summer.

Frequently I hear the Methodist Church both locally and nationally being seen as “punching above its weight”. I think that is very true of CTM; we have put ourselves on the map both socially and ecumenically. Our work is never done, but there is much to be grateful for, and to God be all the glory.

Rev. John McNeill

O.A.K.

This year the OAK annual service, at which John preached, was held in St Marks, and we enjoyed the post-service hospitality of soup and sandwiches.

The OAK cafe, to which several of our number contribute, continues, though due to a decline in customers, has ceased to operate on Mondays; and the introduction of small charges for those in difficult circumstances has virtually removed the charitable cases. I reported last year that the cafe was seeking to add to its number of volunteer helpers, but that has not transpired, which, in addition to the customer decrease, suggests that some difficult decisions as to its future will need to be made. Special lunches, including a Christmas dinner, continue to be successful in providing support for various charities. That on behalf of the primary school in down-town Accra, Ghana, raised £500, and thanks are extended to CTM members who bought tickets.

Michael Dyer

Pastoral Report

Throughout the year Pastoral care continues: visiting our elderly and housebound members, giving practical care and support when needed is on-going and these activities are often only known to those immediately affected, but absolutely essential to the life of a congregation where we seek to “build each other up”.

The subject of “mental health” is increasingly coming into the news; the number of people living in the UK with Dementia is on the increase. The Alzheimer’s Society has said that the faith congregations have a specific role to play in tackling stigma and caring for people with dementia. All of us who are visitors are likely to be in a position of giving support to a person or family who is struggling with mental health. How can our Church be of more help?

Sadly through the year we have recorded the deaths and given thanks for the lives of our brothers in Christ, Andy Dick (Sept 7), Paul Ellingworth (Nov 25) and Alex Booth (April 27), and of our sister Rosalind Peake. We miss them greatly and thank God for their lives of service and witness.

During the year we welcomed into membership Nathan, Marty and Brittany, and Jonathan and Gloria. On Easter Sunday we held three infant baptisms and we pray for the parents and families. Over the year our “Open to All” Tea Parties have been a blessing much enjoyed by those attending; we hope to continue them.

God is in every situation. We call on God’s help in prayer in times of need or celebration. Please continue to pray and give thanks for the Pastoral Visitors and their care.

Anne Hubbuck (Pastoral Secretary)

Prayer Meeting

A midweek prayer meeting takes every two or three weeks on a Wednesday at 7:30pm in Room 4; please check the notice sheet for details. Different members of the group take turns to lead and we normally spend time in open prayer for the needs of our church and the wider world, as well as having some hymns or worship songs and a Bible reading. We are a small group and would very much welcome others coming along to join us, even if you are only able to attend occasionally.

Jackie

Ghana Bible Study

The Ghana Bible Study Group, following notes published by the Methodist Church Ghana, continues to meet weekly, offering an opportunity to consider the same scripture passages as the members of our sister church, St Peter, Accra. One of our number, Aboseh, has left us, and we miss his input, especially when it comes to his knowledge of Hebrew, and we shall soon be without John, whose theological expertise has contributed much to our discussions. We have, nevertheless, been strengthened by the arrival of Jennifer, and welcome a new voice to our deliberations. Our discussions continue to be open-minded, and are permitted to stray in unexpected directions when the spirit so directs. We have an inner core of six participants and would be more than happy to add to our number. Though regular attendance is appreciated we welcome those who can only come occasionally. Perhaps you would welcome the opportunity to explore the faith and have your say.

Michael Dyer

Women's Fellowship

For the final meeting of our 2017-2018 session we visited Pitmedden Gardens where some of us walked and some enjoyed a coffee and a chat, inside because it was too hot to sit outside, then we all went to the Murly Tuc at Tarves for lunch. We have met on the last Monday of every month, apart from December, and alternated between meetings led by members and meetings addressed by visiting speakers. At our October meeting we welcomed Penny Seeby, a member of Society of Friends Meeting at Crown Street, who treated us to an inspiring illustrated talk on the Quaker Tapestry. In February, while on a brief return visit to the UK, Dr. Bryony Ackroyd, gave us a PowerPoint presentation on her programme delivering "Breast Care in Malawi". Our January meeting was cancelled so that members could attend the funeral of our friend and past member of W.F. Rosalind Peake. The All Age Afternoon Tea Parties which we initiated last year have been so successful that we have held several more to coincide with the school holidays. The family round the table has included members of the congregation who are housebound, members who have moved away, guests and folk who need fellowship and a chat. On Sunday May 12th, the Service for Christian Aid Sunday was led by Carol supported by Treasure and WF members and WF provided a soup and tray-bake lunch. Joan will address our May meeting and the venue for our end of session outing in June is under discussion and will be announced in the Church notices. Come and join us on our outing or at our meetings which will resume in September.

M.D.C.

Monday House Group

During the month of June last year we studied the Old Testament book of Jonah. Jonah is a short book which tells the story of a reluctant prophet sent by God to call the people of Nineveh to repent. The Bible Month materials supplied by the Methodist church were a great resource.

Due to other commitments and time restraints the group ceased to meet for further discussions.

Flowers

Flowers put in the Church are there to aid our worship and give glory to God

May Barbour organises the distribution of flowers to members of the Church who are ill, housebound, otherwise in need, or just to say 'thank you'.

Carol Reeves has been placing flowers in the church for many years and would appreciate it if a few more people would sign the flower list in the porch and ease the load. It is an enjoyable activity to do occasionally. Maybe you would like to provide flowers for a Sunday which is special to you? Flowers should be placed in church at least 10 minutes before the service begins.

You do not need to pay a fortune to have a wonderful display. Choose flowers which are in season or on special offer. You may have flowers in your garden which could be placed in church.

Most flowers are bought from a supermarket which stocks a range of Fair Trade, as well as British flowers. Our Church is cool and dark during the week and so is wonderful for keeping flowers fresh once they are open.

Caring for flowers is easy. It is best to add flower food to the vase and then add water. If there is not any flower food with your flowers there is usually some under the sink in the small kitchen. The stalk ends of flowers begin drying as soon as we purchase them and so it is best to cut at least one inch off the bottom before they are placed in a vase to allow them to take up water. (There is an old pair of secateurs in the small kitchen). Remove all leaves that are likely to be below the water line as well as any that are not looking healthy.

This year I have been grateful for the help I have received from Brittany Phillips. Brittany provided the table arrangements for coffee, cake and carols in December and also the beautiful windowsill arrangements for Easter Sunday.

Joan Orskov decorated the Easter cross with a wide range of flowers and foliage. This was a challenge because Easter was later than usual and daffodils were hard to obtain. The result was, in my opinion, one of the best decorated crosses that I have seen.

Thank you to all who have contributed flowers, or money, in the past and to all who will contribute this year.

Carol Reeves

Open Table

Our Sunday meals continue to meet a need with most Sundays seeing well over 20 people coming for a meal and the highest number being 32. Many are regulars but every week seems to bring new faces too.

We are so grateful for support from the congregation; providing soup or dessert, and especially having the tables set – that is invaluable. The number of cooks has grown with Marty and Britt cooking regularly and David and Jack are faithful washers and driers! Helpers are always welcome and appreciated. The clothes bank is well used by our guests and well managed by Joan.

Open Table has developed into a real community that looks out for each other and shares its ups and downs. We have rejoiced when regulars Nikki, Jocky and Richard have all got their own flats, and experienced sadness at the loss some of those known to us.

Table Tennis (Season 2018-19)

During the summer we said goodbye to Ghanaian player David Tetteh, who moved to a new job in Manchester, but we welcomed new player Kevin Anderson to replace him in our B team.

Our A team – Gregor Ksiazek, Martin Richens and Sebastian Wolejnio had a strong season once again, finishing as runners up in Division 1. Meanwhile CTM “B” – Nigel Herbert, Dennis Oon, Mohammad Namavar and Kevin Anderson also had a very successful season. They finished 6th in Division 1 and reached two cup finals. Runners Up in the KO Cup to Triangle Swifts, they emerged victorious in the **League Division 1 Handicap Cup**, beating Aberdeen University Harriers in the Final.

Finally, I debated whether to print the individual averages – for obvious reasons – but, as ever, could not bring myself to hide the truth! New players always welcome!

Nigel Herbert. (nigelherbert1@gmail.com)

Follow the teams at ... <https://www.tabletennis365.com/Aberdeen>

Tables > ADTTA LEAGUE 2018-19 > DIVISION 1								
#	Team	P	W	D	L	SF	SA	Points
1	AU Eagles	14	12	0	2	110	30	110
2	CTM A	14	8	2	4	87	53	87
3	Grammar Hooligans	14	8	3	3	72	68	72
4	AU Harriers	14	7	2	5	72	68	72
5	Triangle Swifts	14	4	3	7	65	75	65
6	CTM B	14	4	4	6	62	78	62
7	Triangle Athletic	14	2	3	9	52	88	52
8	Aircon Westhill	14	1	3	10	40	100	40

Last Updated: 08 May 2019

Individual Averages > ADTTA LEAGUE 2018-19 > DIVISION 1

Player	Team	Played	Won	% Win
Sebastian Wolejnio	CTM A	42	30	71.43%
Dennis Oon	CTM B	42	30	71.43%
Martin Richens	CTM A	42	29	69.05%
Gregor Ksiazek	CTM A	42	19	45.24%
Kevin Anderson	CTM B	36	16	44.44%
Mohammad Namavar	CTM B	30	6	20.00%
Nigel Herbert	CTM B	18	1	5.56%
Displaying: 7 of 35 players			Last Updated: 08 May 2019	

Treasurer's Report

It has become clear over the last two years that Church Income is not sufficient to meet our running costs. Over a longer period, expenditure has been reduced to a level that any further reduction would undermine the fundamental reason why Crown Terrace exists. This is not as much a problem of maintaining the giving of the congregation as of meeting ever increasing costs. A few of our members alive to the position, have already made significant increases to their donations.

A major cause is the downturn in the finances of Aberdeen City; there are fewer Methodists coming to Aberdeen for periods of a few years, while others have had to move away from Aberdeen to seek employment elsewhere. Other former members of our congregation have died or moved away from Aberdeen for personal or family reasons, and this has also had an impact on finances.

There are actions that people can take if they have not done so already which would greatly help.

1. If you are able, please make your weekly or monthly donation to the Church by Standing Order through your bank.
2. If you pay income tax, please sign up for Gift Aid.

The position is not yet critical. The audited accounts show that we entered the Methodist year 2018-19 with adequate reserves, but the deficit in 2017-18 was about £5,000 and it is expected to be at least this amount at the end of 2018-19.

Please help if you are able, by increasing your donations to the Church and enabling us to handle the money we receive in the most productive manner. If you need further details, please ask Jackie or myself, and if you are not sure who we are, ask any of the Stewards to point us out.

Jack Hubbuck (Treasurer).

Toddlers Group and Sunday Club

What's New?

Toddlers Group

A special 'thank you' to **Uwem** who has offered to look after our youngest children - *Please support her and if you can offer to help, even very occasionally*, it will be much appreciated and give her the opportunity to join in worship.

Learning about the needs of our young folk

I attended three trainings this year. At the first one there was some good discussion on helping young people, such as Myles and Malvin, to make the transition between Sunday Club and the move into Church and for them to feel that they **really belong** and are part of our Church family. The congregation's involvement in encouraging our young folk would be much appreciated. One possible way might be to join the older children for one of their Sunday sessions.

What's new?

Our choice of "Roots" as a syllabus for the coming year.

Roots is a joint Churches' initiative, supported by **Churches together in Britain and Ireland**. This links the children's stories to the lectionary, and we have been exploring 'nuggets' from Paul's letters and learning about Paul himself, and his background, this month.

What's new for our Church?

On Saturday a group of us met at the Episcopal church in Banchory where we experienced a complete lesson through the media of Godly Play. This is a new and very visual way of storytelling, and one which allows time for the children to 'wonder' and explore what they have seen, and heard, and an opportunity to ask questions. We have the expertise in the Church and the possibility of borrowing the resources from the Cathedral; and are keen to explore this in the coming months.

Just recently I have been unable to be in Church and would like to thank those who have stepped in and worked with the children and toddlers.

We have a growing group of toddlers and older children which is really great. Please consider if there is any way you can become involved, and please remember the children and their families in prayer.

Anne