

CROWN TERRACE METHODIST CHURCH

# PENTECOST

2017



*Come as the wind with  
rushing sound,  
and Pentecostal grace*

## *Letter from our Minister*

Dear Friends,

I have been reading recently of church activity in Aberdeen in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a fascinating period indeed. So many names I was brought up with, William Chalmers Burns, Rabbi John Duncan, Andrew Murray, William Robertson Smith, William Robertson Nicoll, George MacDonald, Oswald Chambers, George Adam Smith, Peter Taylor Forsyth, to name but a few. Many of them became household names in their time, indeed certain strands of Scottish literature were influenced by them encouraged by William Robertson Nicoll of Lumsden who set up the publisher Hodder and Stoughton. They all lived through a period which has become known as 'Higher Criticism', in the wake of Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859); like the poets Tennyson and Browning, they wrestled with new ways of understanding the Bible's message in the context of a world which was moving speedily forward with industrialisation and the advance of technology. Nothing new there you may say; as the wise man of old once said, 'there is nothing new under the sun'!

I have been struck, however, by one thing they seem to me to have in common. They each took the Bible seriously; they never let go this touchstone of faith. They may have differed over emphases in understanding and moved into different spheres of influence, but the Bible remained central to their outlook even to their dying day. Many of them became distinguished 'men of letters' in their time. To give one instance, in a personal Memoir to her husband Sir George Adam Smith, former Principal of Aberdeen University amongst the many honours conferred on him, Lilian Adam Smith records of him in his elder years, 'I could not help remarking the simple fervour of his worship, the rapt attention he gave to the sermon'.

There is something about these men which has gripped me over the years, especially Oswald Chambers. For me it is their passion for holiness, for living a godly and useful life in the service of others. They were humble men, never self-seeking. But they always raised the tone of the atmosphere round about them. They had an aura, a godly air. They were ambassadors of heaven in the courts of time, who pervaded the courts of time with the atmosphere of eternity. They had integrity, and Aberdeen was a better place for their presence. They also enjoyed company, not only amongst those who were

similarly minded, but also amongst those who were less fortunate than themselves. Hence the erection of Chapels of Ease such as Trinity Chapel on Shiprow (now the Maritime Museum). Their holiness was not a private affair, merely inward-looking, but upward and outward.

All these characteristics I would argue can be found in the lives of the apostles subsequent to the Day of Pentecost. I love the words of Oswald Chambers here, 'Pentecost did not teach the disciples anything; it made them the incarnation of what they preached.' The apostles also had their different emphases, even Peter finding Paul's writings difficult to understand, but they all shared a similar passion for holiness. I believe that the primary work of the Holy Spirit is to 'purify our hearts by faith' and the Apostles and the Aberdonians so named bore witness to this by their lives of usefulness. As my Mother used to say, 'I'd rather see a preacher than hear one any day.' Yes indeed, our actions should speak louder than our words. For John Wesley: 'Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian holiness.' (*Works* 14:333f.) May we also continue to be a witness to the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts so that others may be touched and we bring a little of heaven into our darkened world.

Whitsun blessings on each and all.

John McNeill

## *Church Family News*

### *Birth:*

*A daughter Olivia to Tomas and Jurgita Serafinavicius on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.*

### *Deaths:*

*Isabella (Bunty) Young died at the age of 89 on 10<sup>th</sup> May at Tor-Na-Dee Care Home.*

*Until a few years ago she had regularly attended Crown Terrace and had been a member of the CT Sisterhood. We remember her with affection .*

*Rev Michael Burch died peacefully at Banff Care Home on May 26<sup>th</sup>.*

*Those who remember his preaching at Crown Terrace will have fond memories of him.*

*We send our sympathy to their families.*

*We ask you to remember in your prayers all those members who have been unable to worship with us in recent months -*

*Gloria Milne, Alex Booth, Margaret Anderson, Jessie  
Petrie and Frank Judson*

*and we commend them to God's love.*

## I Don't Believe In Death - Pauline Webb

I don't believe in death  
Who comes in silent stealth  
He robs us only of a breath  
Not of a lifetime's wealth  
I don't believe the tomb  
Imprisons us in earth  
It's but another loving womb  
Preparing our new birth  
I do believe in life  
Empowered from above  
Till freed from stress and worldly strife  
We soar through realms above  
I do believe that then  
In joy that never ends  
We'll meet all those we've loved, again  
And celebrate our friends.

*This poem was read at the Women's Fellowship as we remembered Pauline Webb. Seeing it, Ingrid was reminded of the following poem she wrote a few years ago:*

## Timely – Ingrid Reneau

Death came openly, and unashamedly into our *class*.  
Uninvited, he swept in, his arms opened wide,  
greeting us as if he was a long lost brother.

But there was something unnerving about his sudden entrance that made us shiver...something about the way his eyes gleamed with anticipation and hunger...something about the coldness in our hearts as he entered through the door...and sat down, as if he'd come to learn something more

...But what else could he learn among us?

That while he wasn't welcomed, we could stomach his purpose? Or that each time he swallowed, he ate more than we were willing to surrender?

But didn't someone block his entrance? Didn't someone recognise his intention and stop him long time ago?

Didn't we know his effect? Greedily devouring breaths that were not his own?  
Never satisfied until all was gone, and forever too?

A thief is what he's always been: robbing Life from those living, but  
still dead...dead to the Life beyond...

This he knew only too well: the Life Beyond, where the sea of breaths  
began, and didn't end.

This he knew, and thus he always came to kill...and  
destroy in this *class*

where we are always learning  
but not always coming to the Truth

in time...

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Letter from Mark Cooper

(Mark studied computing at Aberdeen University and although being confined to a wheelchair most of the time, he will be remembered as a bright cheerful young man with a wicked sense of humour)

Hi All,

I hope you're well.

For those of you who don't know me. I attended CTM as a student from 2003-2007. It continues to be the happiest church going period of my life. As Methodists we are about to enter a new preaching quarter. My dad David is a Methodist Minister in Shetland (although at present he is working for the Church of Scotland). For him it's his final quarter as a minister. as he retires on August 13th.

Why am I telling you this? CTM plays a huge part in my family story. He was working in Shetland at the time I was born in December 1984. I have a twin brother and we were born 12 weeks early so spent the first few months of our lives in the maternity unit at ARI. My mum stayed with the Rev Harold Bowes during that time, without the hospitality of CTM- (the warm welcome that continues to this day) she could have been lonely at that worrying time. Please remember my parents in your prayers this quarter as they transition

into the next stage of their lives. I continue to remember CTM in mine and I hope to return soon to share in worship with you.

Best Wishes

Mark

### **Connectivity in Christ**

Yesterday I joined the congregation at Crown Terrace in surveying the wondrous cross and praising our risen King, and I felt at home. I was home, and yet thousands of miles away from home. I was with family, yet thousands of miles away from family.

It has been just over a year since Rachel, Luree, Alma, and I said goodbye to Aberdeen and returned home to Portland, Oregon. Ever since that day, Luree has warmly reminisced with Rachel and I, saying, "I miss our Aberdeen house." To which we always reply, "we do too." And because Alma will copy everything Luree does, she pipes in as well, "deen how!" We miss the sites and routines of our life in Aberdeen. But most of all, we miss our friends and our church family that made Aberdeen a home, for us, away from home.

Since returning to Portland, much has happened. Rachel is now teaching English at a Christian high school. I am working a couple days a week at my old job and am finalizing my thesis. The girls are enjoying our new apartment with a fireplace and a community pool to boot. And we are all relishing the warmth of being near the friends and family we dearly missed while in Scotland.

We have been thrown back into the mix of our small church, Irvington Covenant, that remains in the midst of a two-year search for a new pastor and continues to recover from the volatile discussion of race that sent us spiralling three-years ago (the impetus for my doctoral research). While our church in Portland has a much different style of worship and external appearance, it has the same intimate texture that marks Crown Terrace Methodist. I guess this is part of the reason why I felt so at home yesterday. I experience the same connectivity in Christ at Crown Terrace that my family and I have come to know and love at our little church in Portland. Crown Terrace makes me miss Irvington Covenant, and Irvington make miss Crown Terrace.

Crown Terrace and Irvington are connected for us, because the connectivity we share in Christ is simultaneously in motion among those gathered in both places. I take great hope in this Spirit-driven, already established connectivity that goes on even when we are not bodily present to share in it, on either side of the pond. I take great hope in this connectivity especially in the current political climate, where there is more talk of building walls and closing borders than talk about how we are all connected whether we recognize it or not.

Through Crown Terrace not only are we connected to Aberdeen but to Ghana, Nigeria, Poland, South Africa, Germany, Cameroon, Fiji, and the list goes on. What an honour to participate in this community, and what a hope we have because of the connectivity we share through our merciful and ever-present God!

Ross Halbach

## Politics and Religion

Before local government reorganisation in the early 1970s political parties did not contest elections to Stonehaven Town Council, and candidates stood without any label whatsoever. One of the most notorious councillors was Alice Blacklaws, owner of The Boutique in the town square, whose main campaigning appeal at the hustings was that she had met the Duke of Edinburgh. It was also observed that in the run-up to election day she attended services in all the main churches. She was invariably successful. Religion has always been mixed up in politics, but rarely in the most edifying way because the links have been institutional rather than theological, about secular and ecclesiastical power rather than the promotion of the Kingdom of God. In Scotland the outcome of the reformation aligned Tories, episcopalians and Jacobites on the one hand against Whigs (Liberals), presbyterians, and Hanoverians on the other. A law was passed in the early eighteenth century required an episcopalian elector to swear on oath that he had attended a recent service at which the priest/minister had prayed for the Hanoverian monarch by name, on pain of disfranchisement. To be a Tory in Scotland was

almost synonymous to being a traitor to the state It's remarkable how that sentiment has persisted, if in a less virulent form.

The strength of presbyterianism and its links with the Liberals was so strong in nineteenth century Scotland that they could be seen as essential components of what it was to be a Scot. Often elections were simply between different sorts of Liberals who reflected the fault lines in the kirk, free churchmen going for one candidate and established (official) churchmen going for the other. Gladstone, who led the Liberals for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and whose interests included theology as well as politics, was always careful to maintain good relations with Principal Rainy, the leading Free Churchman. Non-presbyterians could struggle, as a Unitarian Liberal found to his electoral cost in Dundee.

Irish Catholic immigration in the late nineteenth century with its links to Irish nationalism transformed Scottish electoral politics. The Liberals split and the Liberal Unionists made common cause with the Conservatives to defend Scotland's protestant culture. Following the adult franchise in 1918, the Irish Catholic voters moved solidly behind the Labour Party. In the West of Scotland elections at the local level were often understood as a conflict between Protestant and Catholic. A Unionist (Conservative) candidate in Lanarkshire in the 1950s was somewhat taken aback when a local activist greeted him: "Don't worry, sir. We'll keep the Papes out!". The decline of religion in the last fifty years has been a major factor in accounting for the weakening of traditional confessional-politico loyalties and the emergence of the SNP.

You will gather from my remarks that I have a certain detached attitude and scepticism towards the value of a close association between religion and politics. Examples in other parts of the world, from Islamic fundamentalism to Christian Tea Party nihilism in the USA only serve to reinforce that position. Nevertheless, I'll use my vote hoping to promote a greater good, though, for similar motives you may choose differently. I don't think God will mind that much.

M.D.

("I am puzzled which bible people are reading when they say religion and politics don't mix" Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

## *A Good Read.....*

### The Best of Blue

Shortly before Christmas I was saddened to hear of the passing of Rabbi Lionel Blue – a name familiar to any regular listener to BBC4's 'Thought for the Day'. Soon after I had the phone call I often dread each year "Any ideas of what you'd like for Christmas, Mum?" This time the answer was easy, a book by Lionel Blue. And come Christmas, I was not disappointed.

The book is a collection he made in his seventies from previous books, articles in the Tablet and previously unpublished work. They range from a single page to several pages long. All have profound thoughts tempered with gentle humour – he believed jokes are the way people can cope with problems they can't solve. A gay rabbi, he once said he had experienced 2 ghettos and consequently much pain but never shied away from addressing sensitive issues. He writes of the peace he's found on retreat in Christian monasteries, he quotes the writings of Saint Paul. He addresses the sin of Vanity by suggesting one should not breathe in when buying new jeans for the holidays. He uses everyday experiences in a way that makes one stop and think.

The Rev Dr.Giles Fraser, in paying tribute to Lionel Blue said "I only met him twice but felt he was my friend. His warmth of human compassion leapt out across the airwaves..... he used his own vulnerability as a gift for others" That warmth pervades the book and it certainly won't get retired to the back of my bookshelf.

Anonymous

### *Baffled to Fight Better Oswald Chambers, (1916)*

I recently discovered that Chambers was born in 1874 in a cottage on the Hardgate bang in the middle of a battlefield along the slopes of Bon Accord Gardens leading up to Justice Mill Lane. The 'Battle of Justice Mill' (1644) was fought between the Royalists under the Marquis of Montrose, who won the battle but ultimately lost the war, and the Covenanters, with the Aberdeen slain thrown down the Hardgate Well. Strangely Chambers was also to die on a battlefield in Egypt (1917) where he served the British Army during WW1. The book under review is based on a series of talks he gave to the British soldiers in a YMCA hut. It was the only book he saw go to press before he died. All of his

other books, including his 'My Utmost for His Highest', were compiled and published by his wife posthumously. The talks are Chambers' exposition of Job's sufferings. He draws a parallel between Job's world and his own to suggest that human life and affairs cannot be understood merely on the basis of reason, 'Job's comforters' approach. Rather, experience of life shows us that the basis of life is tragic. Here Chambers was critiquing certain forms of rationalism which he argued would never answer questions posed such as those by the men in the trenches. Chambers repeatedly contends that humanity's only hope is to accept what God has done through Christ's redemption. It is evident in these talks that Chambers was well adept in philosophy, psychology, and literature, as well as in theology. His thought is profound but not dense. His strongest criticism is directed to forms of theology which bear no relation to life and reality and are only consistent within the bounds of reason as if experience does not matter. ('Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds.') Clearly Chambers understood what I would call 'the bafflement of life', but instead of seeing that as a form of weakness, he turns it around to show that it can become the Christian's greatest strength, enabling him, and us, 'to fight better'.

John McNeill

## The Methodist Recorder

I find that one of the best ways of keeping in touch with what is happening in other parts of the connexion is to read the weekly newspaper *The Methodist Recorder*. Many years ago, young Methodists used to turn eagerly every Thursday to its "Births, marriages and deaths" section, to see if any of their friends had been married or become engaged. Now, alas!, it is more a matter of seeing "who has died in the *Recorder*".

That may sound an unattractive prospect, but these and other contributions sometimes put into perspective a whole swathe of Methodist and wider experience. Among these stand out Colin Morris's moving (two-page!) tribute to Pauline Webb, once his colleague at the BBC, and his vigorous defence of professional religious broadcasting, now under threat.

Past issues of *The Methodist Recorder* are available on loan from the vestibule. They are the best way I know of getting to know what is going on in the connection – sorry, **connexion**.

P.E.

## *Postcards from Australia*

April 2017 - Melbourne - Good Friday

Weather here is beautiful. Everyone is very friendly and helpful, which makes the unwelcoming attitude to refugees surprising. Walk of witness culminated with a service outside the R.C. Cathedral which displayed a large banner reading, "Let's fully welcome refugees"

Melbourne Sat 15<sup>th</sup> April

Beautiful city, absolutely free of litter, with impressive public buildings built from the wealth of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Gold Rush, but, as here, there are people begging on the streets and there is a problem of homelessness. There were people living under the railway arches.

Melbourne April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Another beautiful day. Visited National Trust property Rippon Lea. Considered very old. Built in 1868. Lovely walk through autumnal trees and along the beach to St. Kilda. Carefully skirted a bridal party taking advantage of the amazing sunset for their wedding pictures. Saw Fairy penguins returning to their burrows after sundown then consumed a large meal. Took photos for grandchildren of Big Dipper at Luna amusement park built 1912. "But why didn't you go on the ride Grandma, you're tall enough, you're old enough and you had pocket money?"

Gardens. Melbourne.

Beautiful. Victoria, the Garden State - Signs in the parks and Botanical Gardens give information about the tribes to whom the land originally belonged. Strenuous, sensitive efforts are being made to make amends Botanic and apologise to the indigenous population for their treatment by the early settlers and for many years after. Images of people who have died are unacceptable to some native Australians and there was an alert at an exhibition in the main library that some visitors might prefer not to view some sections as they contained photos of people who were no longer alive.

Sydney.

Impressive. Very clean with efficient, cheap transport system. Walked across the Harbour Bridge and round the Opera House. In the evening the homeless gathered in a large square where food was distributed from vans belonging to

Churches, there was a laundry van and support workers were active. Information on how to donate was printed on the sides of the vans.

MDC.

## Things aren't what they used to be .....

### .....*CHANGES IN NURSING*

There have been dramatic changes in nursing since I started my training 54 years ago. Then we went to classes five days a week and to the ward on Saturday morning for three months. It was very much hands on training where we were allowed to carry out procedures as they occurred in the ward under the supervision of a staff nurse, we did not have to have been taught in the classroom first. We sat state exams three times during our training both written and practical. We went to classes one day a week during our three years where a nurse tutor gave us more theoretical information. Now student nurses are in the class far more and go in blocks to carry out practical studies. I appreciate there are far more machines used in the caring of patients now and patients are sent home much quicker but I am glad I nursed when I did as I feel we had more time to spend getting to know our patients and although the care given nowadays is excellent and nurses still care deeply they do not have the time to really get to know them

MB

### .....*BRIDGING THE GENERATIONS*

An aged father had the following dialogue (lightly edited but otherwise authentic) with his middle-aged son:

Son: I got on the bus and asked what the single fare is. The driver said the ticket machine wasn't working and I should just sit down. So I got free transport for a journey which normally costs about £7. I heard them say that they had fitted a new ticket machine at the depot and takings went down by about 30%, simply because the machines have been failing all over the place

and won't perform the fairly fundamental function of printing tickets.  
Modern technology for you.

Father: I was puzzled by your reference to ticket machines. Surely the conductor just takes a ticket from his belt (2d, 4d, or whatever it may be), punches it, and gives it to the customer. I used to collect them, with the help of a cousin known as Ronnie Bus Ticket.

Son: Conductor?

Father: The man who issues the tickets, without whom the driver could not do his job.

Son: That would be ridiculous. If the driver didn't stop all the passengers getting on and make them buy a ticket, the bus would be able to pull away as soon as everyone had boarded and the bus would get to its destination on time. Then you would have this "conductor" person walking around inside a moving vehicle, which is a health and safety nightmare. Next you're going to be telling me that buses used to have a platform that anyone could jump onto or off, even when the bus was moving, without as much as a guard rail! Nobody would ever allow that.

PE

#### .....Reflections on Police Days Gone By

Having retired some 25 years ago, it is always a pleasure to draw down on very pleasant memories of "guarding, watching and patrolling", and protecting life and property with a particular emphasis on the youth of the day.

So, the 2nd year class is waiting with bated breath for my one hour talk and discussion on the history of the police.

And off I go into Sir Robert Peel right up to the then 8 Police Forces in Scotland and the problems they faced with the many gin houses, and violent crime and robberies of the day.

I also explained the transition of the village constable to a hi-tech mobile force equipped with radio and walkie talkies at the end of which I invited questions from the class.

The first pupil to put up his hand asked - "see when policemen die, are they buried just like human beings?"

I somehow knew then I had failed the communication test.

And the years rolled by into the eighties by which time secondary school territorial warfare was all the rage and gangs of 20 - 30 youths would march in the direction of the enemy secondary school to have a pitched scrap and try to win the day.

On such an occasion I was sent to Rosehill Drive near the ring road to head off a group from Hilton Academy (now flats) in Hilton Drive seen heading for Northfield Academy in Granitehill Place.

I got out of my patrol car approached them near the chipper in Rosehill and in my most polite and friendly voice said " oh, hello, can I speak to your leader" to which a very small possibly first year pupil obviously keen to ingratiate himself with the leader pointed to this third year chap and said - "its him". The leader looked down on him with utter contempt and said "what did you say that for".

Now I honestly cannot tell you if that small boy lived through that day but with the leader in my pocket it was fairly easy to warn them off and they broke up and went home.

She was 15 years old and she was wanted on warrant for two crimes of wilful fireraising, and there she was standing with her friends at shops in the north end of the city. Well I was out of the car like a bullet and she took off in the direction of Westbury Drive. Now to be honest I was good at short spurts but definitely not long distance and by good fortune I was able to get near enough to trip her up. She fell to the ground and she turned face up with a knife in her hand. I kicked the knife out of her hand and sat astride her to hold her down.

When I had gotten my breath back, I said to her - 'do you know what I am going to do now?' - If you do not stop struggling, I am going to tell all your friends that you were chased and caught by a 50 year old policeman.

To which she replied "dinner dae that - I'll be affronted" upon which she stopped struggling.

Finally, Aberdeen were playing Rangers at Pittodrie and I was looking out for the youths who would try to get in for nothing by crawling through the long grass beyond the South Stand and getting under the fence. Having done that they then pretended to go to the toilet and thus 'return to watch the match'

Well one such youth, whom I had seen coming in that way approached where I was standing and I asked him why he did what he did.

He replied very honestly - "Well you see I had no money to get in, I did need the toilet and I thought since I am in the ground I might as well go and watch the match"

And so he did.

RH

.....*the good old days?*

We hear much today about poverty and the need for food banks but I think there was even greater need in the thirties. Few had any employment. There were long queues at the Labour Exchange in Market Street. I think of some of my class mates like the girl who only had a thin cotton dress to wear even in the coldest weather and the boy who trudged through ice and snow with only gym shoes on his feet. I remember seeing boys picking up tiny fragments of coal which had fallen off a boat as it was unloaded in the harbour and ill fed and ill clad men, glad when there was snow and they could get a day's work sweeping it. There was no health service, as we know it, till about 1946. People had to pay the doctor.

Pupils had to pay for school books. If they took care of them they could sell them back to the school at half price and a younger class could get a cheaper book. Sums were done on slates and we learned to write with pens which had steel nibs which we dipped in the inkwell on the desk.

While still in the infant department we made a bag which would later be used for holding our sewing. A piece of material was folded and the sides were over sewn with coloured thread. When I came to do the second side I had what I thought was a bright idea. If I did larger stitches I would get to the end more quickly. When I showed my work to the teacher she did not think it was a good idea at all. She gave me the strap and made me pick it out the stitches with sore fingers. I have been rather wary of bright ideas ever since.

ECY

(Does anyone else remember children, seeing their classmate eating an apple asking if they could have the core? JØ)

## SITUATIONS VACANT

CTM is in urgent need of a PROPERTY STEWARD. To be responsible for the fabric of the building, organising day to day repairs and maintenance. More details can be had from Rev John McNeill or one of the stewards. If you feel this is too big a task for you but would be interested in a job-share with someone else please speak to them.

There is a vacancy for a Notice Compiler to join the team.

**Job Description** - Compile the Notice Sheet, send readings to Readers, send hymns to Organists and print the Notice Sheet in Church or a place of your choosing.

**Qualifications required** – Basic computer literacy.

**Hours** – You can choose to do one or two consecutive months.

**Salary** – There is none, just the satisfaction of using your talents for the work of God in our church

For more Information contact Anne Kelley, Joan Orskov or Lorna Herbert

All churches are required to have a safeguarding officer.

CTM does not have anyone holding this position at present so there is an urgent need to fill the post. If you feel you could possibly serve in this way please talk to Rev John McNeill.

*Thanks to all who have contributed to this edition - to our readers we hope you will have found the contents both thought provoking and entertaining.*

Cover picture sourced by Michael Dyer

# **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE
June 11th	5pm	OPEN TABLE	CTM
June 25th	5pm	OPEN TABLE	CTM
July 9th	5pm	OPEN TABLE	CTM
Aug 18 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>		VISIT OF NATIONAL METHODIST YOUTH BRASS BAND	CTM
19th	7:30pm	CONCERT	
Sept 9th	TBA	DISTRICT SYNOD	CTM
Oct 1st	11am	HARVEST THANKSGIVING	CTM
Oct 21st	TBA	CHURCH AWAY DAY	KEMNAY KIRK CENTRE



