

Saint James



Cruden Bay

Saint Mary



Ellon



February
March
2023

***WE SEEK TO BE CHURCHES FILLED WITH GOD'S LOVE,
GIVING IT AWAY TO OTHERS***

Saint Mary's and Saint James's are congregations of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Scottish part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, which includes the Churches of England, Ireland, Wales, the Episcopal Church of the USA, and the Anglican Church of Canada as well as churches in most countries of the world.

However, even more important than that, we are members of God's family and all members of that family, from whichever denomination (or none), are welcome to worship with us. We try to welcome everyone in a non-judgmental way. Our congregations seek to develop the ministry of everyone, allowing people to find what God is asking of them and the gifts that he is giving to them.

Our churches are open for communal worship:

The present Sunday worship times are -

9-30am The Eucharist in Saint James's

11-0am The Eucharist in Saint Mary's

Other services as announced in Church. The Sacrament is reserved in both Saint Mary's and Saint James's.

OUR PARISH PRAYER

Father, pour out your Spirit upon us and grant us a new vision of your glory, a new experience of your power, a new faithfulness to your word and a new consecration to your service, that your love may grow among us and your kingdom come: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Front Page Photo:

A Chilly Siskin

By Andy Leonard

RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS: An Amazing Memory.



Although this image looks like an idyllic “winter wonderland” the reality beneath this pristine scene was of treacherous travel conditions as Aberdeenshire’s pavements and roads were locked in the icy grip of a blast of cold Arctic weather this past December. After taking this photograph from the Rectory’s front door, I retreated back inside the house and warmed my hands by cradling a steaming cup of tea. Picturesque it may have looked, but it definitely was not an easy day to venture forth safely either on the roads or the pavements.

Whilst holding my cuppa and looking out the window, I noticed a few birds bravely poking around in the snow. Since winter’s whiteness had blanketed everything, I thought to myself that those poor birds probably were going to have a rather difficult day hunting for something to eat. Nearly a fortnight after that snowfall I read an article about an amazing bird called Clark’s Nutcracker. Every year it prepares for winter by hiding parcels of four or five pine seeds. The seeds are tiny, and these fast-working birds can store away as many as five hundred seeds an hour. Then, months later when winter arrives, the Clark’s Nutcracker returns to uncover the seeds that it had hidden earlier. Furthermore, it successfully

accomplishes this task even when heavy snow covers all the original hiding places into which the bird had secreted his caches of pine seeds. But what really astonished me was to read that a Clark's Nutcracker can remember as many as ten thousand locations where it has hidden seeds! What a contrast to us humans who often seem to wander around our homes in growing frustration when we have difficulty remembering the location of where we last left our mobile phone, car keys, or reading glasses.

Yet even the incredible act of memory by the Clark's Nutcracker bird pales in comparison with God's ability to remember our prayers. God ably and expertly keeps track of every prayerful petition that we utter, remembering and responding to each prayer and never losing or forgetting even the slightest details of our intercessions. Whether our prayerful utterance be spoken words or silent thoughts or merely a longing breath, it is heard and cherished by God.

In the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John describes the worship of God in heaven in this way: "*The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*" (Revelation 5:8) In the ancient world incense was a precious and costly commodity. Our prayers are so precious to God that he keeps them before him continually, treasured in golden bowls. Our personal petitions, no matter whether they be short and simple or eloquently crafted litanies, matter a great deal to God because **we** matter to him! One of the great things about prayer is the constant availability of God. Each one of us has complete access to God at absolutely any time that we desire to communicate with Our Lord.

Although I was impressed when I read about the Clark's Nutcracker bird having the ability to remember up to ten thousand separate locations where it has hidden seeds for the provision of food throughout the winter, I am even more in awe of Almighty God who not only hears every syllable of our prayers but also never forgets the smallest item that we mention in our intercessions. How wonderful it is to know that not a single word of our prayers ever will be overlooked, misplaced, or forgotten by God who loves us so much that he cherishes and treasures even the tiniest iota of any word or thought that we utter.



Wednesday, 22nd February

10.00am – Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes
in Saint Mary's Hall

2.00pm – Ashing Eucharist in
Saint James, followed by the
Annual General Meeting



Tuesday, 7th March

7.30pm – *Annual General Meeting*
in Saint Mary's Hall

Mainly Music After-Christmas Christmas Party!

A very jolly time was had by all at Mainly Music for our first session after Christmas. With the hall temporarily repaired after the burst pipes, we were keen to restart as soon as we could. The Christmas party had been scheduled for – yes you've guessed it – before Christmas! But the freezing weather conspired against us and meant that the party had to be postponed. We had promised that the party would be held as soon as possible - so we had our Christmas party in January. Well done to our storyteller Margaret Kaye for telling the Nativity story in her own inimitable fashion! Concertina Angels, Bethlehem jigsaws and a Bran Tub were enjoyed by the children and their mums, along with delicious party food. Well worth the wait!



Scotland's History and the Episcopal Church (Part 4)

Our former Rector, Gerald Stranraer-Mull, guides us.

THE REVOLUTION AND ITS RESULTS

William and his wife Mary, James's daughter, were proclaimed King and Queen, and in England the bishops, clergy and people generally welcomed them. The new monarchs wanted the same religious settlement in both England and Scotland, but the Scottish bishops thought of the new regime as temporary and would not break their oaths of loyalty to James. And so the Presbyterian Church, for whom which no such difficulties existed, once more became the Church of Scotland.

It was Episcopalian involvement in the Jacobite Risings which caused the Church to become what Sir Walter Scott described as "a shadow of a shade". After the failure of the Risings there were penalties for Episcopalian priests who would not swear allegiance to the Hanoverian monarchs who succeeded Queen Anne, the last Stuart monarch to reign in person, and there were penalties too for lay people who choose to remain loyal to the Church.

A strain of "Qualified Chapels" - Episcopalian in name, with priests in English, Welsh or Irish Orders, not recognising the authority of the Scottish bishops and willing to pray for King George – proved attractive for some. The penalties for Episcopalians were relaxed during the reign of George III and removed in 1792. But by then there were just four bishops and forty priests of the Episcopal Church ministering to five percent of Scotland's population.

However, the circumstances in which the bishops found themselves did not prevent them from effectively beginning (what is now the world-wide) Anglican Communion. In 1784 Samuel Seabury, a priest in the newly independent United States, was elected as bishop by the clergy of Connecticut. He travelled to England to seek consecration but the English bishops were unable and unwilling to ordain him without the requisite oath of allegiance to King George. He came north to Scotland where the

bishops had no such scruples. (In 1820 the Scottish bishops took a further foray onto the international stage by consecrating Matthew Luscombe, a priest in Paris, as a bishop to minister to British Anglicans living in France and fifty years later the Episcopal Church took responsibility for mission work in Kaffaria in South Africa and Chandra in India).

The death of Charles III, Bonnie Prince Charlie, in 1788 and the succession of his brother, Henry I and IX, who was a bishop and cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, allowed the Episcopal Church formally to give up its loyalty to the Stuart kings.

The far-seeing Primus, John Skinner, began a rapprochement with the Government and in 1789 the Scottish bishops agreed that King George and the Royal Family Church be prayed for in each church. In 1792, at its second attempt, the Westminster Parliament passed the Scottish Episcopalians Relief Act, and John Skinner also found a way in 1804 of uniting the Episcopalian congregations and the Qualified Chapels into one Church. The way was open for the 19th century's growth and expansion.

THE 19th CENTURY – A NEW BEGINNING

The lifting of restrictions and penalties on Episcopalian led to a boom in church building across the nation. Almost all the buildings belonging to the Church before the Revolution in 1690 were now Presbyterian and so a building programme began. This resurgence coincided with the Oxford Movement, which sought to recall the richness of worship in the pre-Reformation Church.

The Episcopal Church had a high doctrine of the Eucharist, although its practice was ascetic and simple. At the restoration of Episcopacy in 1660 it would have been difficult to distinguish Episcopalian and Presbyterian clergy as both groups wore black Geneva gowns. But now a change began to happen both in the architecture of buildings and in the worship itself where, gradually over the next 150 years, the celebration

of the Eucharist became the normal and central act of Sunday worship in most congregations, the black gown being replaced by the surplice and later by Eucharistic vestments. The governance of the Church also became more democratic with deans and representative clergy joining the bishops in decision making, and they were later joined by the laity.

The Church grew in a wide range of ways. It became fashionable among the nobility and gentry who, educated in English public schools, felt more at home with Episcopal worship than with the Presbyterian forms of the Church of Scotland. And, in what were still autocratic times, some demanded that their household staff and estate workers be with them in church (a practice which in a few places still persisted into the 1970s and, perhaps, beyond).

The Church also appealed to the emerging professional classes and neither did it neglect the poor. Bishop Alexander Penrose Forbes diligently visited slum, tenement housing in Dundee, even in times of epidemic when others stayed away. Churches in (what was to become) the Anglo-Catholic tradition were founded in the cities specifically to minister to the poor, and they brought love, colour and vibrancy into the drab and harsh lives of those around them.

Other factors in this growth included the greater mobility of the population, which meant people were freer to choose a Church for themselves (rather than simply continue in that of their parents) and also immigration into Scotland - people from the Anglican Churches of England, Wales and Ireland brought many extra members to the Episcopal Church.

A Sense of Goose

Mandy Davis writes:

The Loch of Strathbeg, near Crimond, is well worth a visit! It's a vital wintering and staging post for pink-footed geese, and home to a variety of wetland wildlife - breeding terns, migrating waders and wintering wildfowl. Some years ago, I took a Primary 3 class on a day's visit, picnic lunch in hand, and one of the activities of the day was a demonstration enacted by the children (and their teacher!) of how and why geese fly in the pattern which we have all heard and seen in the sky above us. I have certainly never forgotten it, and I hope the visit was equally memorable for the class too.



When you see geese on their annual migrations flying in a "V" formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily, because they are travelling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stay in formation with those people who are heading the same way we are.

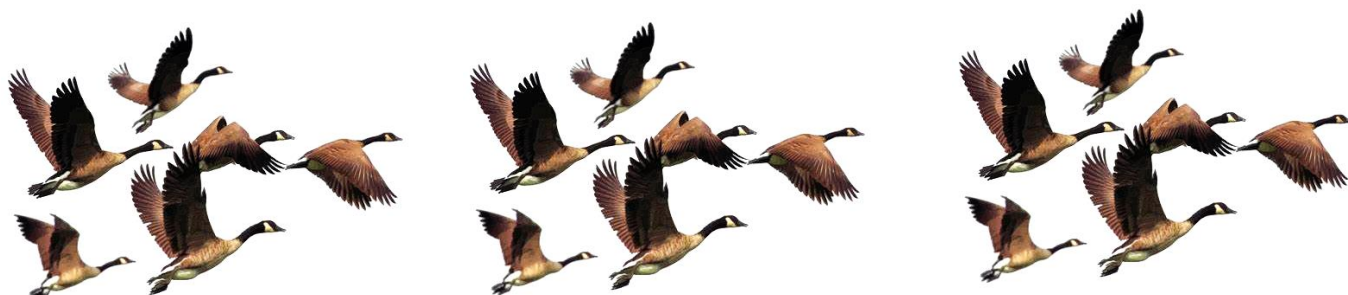
When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.

It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs, whether with people or with geese flying south.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What message do we give when we honk from behind?

Finally - and this is important - when a goose gets sick or injured and falls out of the formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies; and only then do they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their own group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.



PARISH DIRECTORY

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The Reverend Dr Dennis Berk
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Clergy:

The Reverend Robert Spencer (01358 723193)
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Saint James Worship Leader

John Palmer

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The Vestry Secretary of Saint James's is Mary Ferguson (01779 812556) and the Treasurer is Steve Rainey (01358 751372). The Stewardship Promoter: Vacancy. PVG Officer is Mary Ferguson (01779 812556).

The Rector's Secretary is Carol Marr. She can be reached in the Parish Office (01358 720366) from Tuesday to Friday from 10-0am to 3-0pm.

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be given to Mandy and Dick Davis
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