

The Quarterly Magazine

St. Mary's, Carden Place

**Trinity 2024
160th Anniversary Edition**



ANNIVERSARIES

We mark anniversaries at birthdays, for weddings, for charities etc. Some of us are big fans of this habit and love these celebrations. Others don't like a big fuss being made - especially if it would put us in the spotlight.

As we approach our 160th Anniversary at St Marys what might we bear in mind so that this opportunity is not wasted?

I hope there will be looking back. We will remember the people who established and sustained St Marys bringing it through until today. Some will know names and faces. For others of us it will be to give thanks for what we have been handed without knowing many of those who have gone before. I'm delighted that Very Rev Graham Taylor, a cherished priest from recent years, will be with us on the 18th of August.

160 years is quite some achievement! We hope that our Sunday worship and anniversary lunch will be full of joy and celebration.

Looking back can be more than mere nostalgia for the past. It can focus us for the future. Although the national and local context have changed so much this is a good moment to recommit to the things that have not changed.

Why do we think our church matters and what is our part to keep it moving forward?

Rev'd Roger

ST. MARY'S CARDEN PLACE, IN ITS 160TH YEAR

As St. Mary's now enters its seventeenth decade, some might look about and wonder where that decade will take us. For the first time in years we cannot afford a stipend for a new rector. The diocese is in an unhappy state, as we wait to hear what will happen with Bishop Anne, and learn to work with our third stand-in Bishop in a year. Attendances at almost all churches across the city and shire are low. Where are we going? What is our purpose here? Would anyone miss us if we just faded away?

The church in Ephesus might well have thought that when they received the letter we know today as Ephesians. There had been great fallings-out there, and in the world around them there were accusations of witchcraft, political strife, warfare, corruption. Their guide, Paul of Tarsus, was in prison in Rome, about to be executed, which is why he was writing them this last letter. Put on God's armour, he told them. Pray constantly, for yourself and for others. Keep going.

The Episcopalians in Scotland might have thought that during the time of the Penal Laws. Would it be easier just to admit defeat, stop our clandestine meetings in threes and fours in someone's attic, and give up? But they did not. Bishop John Skinner, among others, led the way in rebuilding co-operation and then friendship with the Government and the Established Church, and saw the last of the Penal Laws revoked. If he had not, we might not be here today.

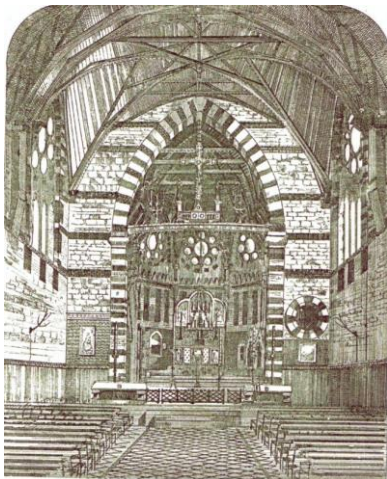
The Oxford Movement, the inspiration for the foundation of St. Mary's, was one of many new ideas that nearly split our church. Our original congregation broke away from St. John's, causing dissension and enmity at every level. God has filled His church with humans, and we are terribly fallible, whoever we are. Yet though we still have 'High Churches' and 'Low Churches' and everything in between, the Oxford Movement no longer has the power to split our church – and who knows what other arguments will also fade into the past, leaving us wondering what all the fuss was about?

Some people come into a church for the first time to find other people, and unexpectedly encounter God. Some people come in looking for God, and unexpectedly find a community. If we do nothing else at St. Mary's over the decades to come, let us help to bring anyone who comes to our church to both God and community, here in the west end of Aberdeen.



THE SIXTEEN DECADES OF ST. MARY'S

1864 – 1874



St. Mary's was founded by Rev. F.G. Lee, an ambitious young man who led a number of the congregation of St. John's away with him to his new charge. He oversaw the building of our church, which already needed a new heating system and roof repairs before it was ten years old due to Rev. F.G. Lee's ambitious designs. In debt and unconsecrated, even after Lee's bankruptcy and departure the new congregation somehow survived and appointed new clergy (on a very low stipend!).

1874 – 1884

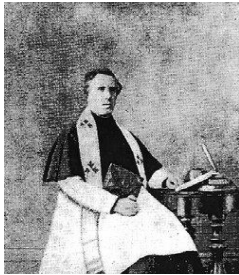
In April 1874, a Bazaar was proposed to liquidate the debt, and arranged for two days in October 1875: it was advertised over a year ahead. It made £1,000 (about £17,000 in today's money), and by moving funds to the debt account from an overdraft account, the foundation debt was paid off.

1884 – 1894

In 1886 St. Mary's first Scottish rector arrived, Rev. Francis William Christie from Dundee. Christie was relentless in clearing the debt and encouraging his congregation as a community, and more importantly, he stayed put at St. Mary's, showing his own commitment as an example to others. St. Mary's badly needed the continuity. The debt was whittled away gradually until it stood at £186 – which was cleared by an anonymous donation of gold coins in December 1889.

On 16th. April, 1890, St. Mary's was finally consecrated.

1894 – 1904



1901 saw the death of Queen Victoria, and the end of the era in which St. Mary's was founded.

The founder of the congregation, Rev. F.G. Lee, died in London in 1902.

1904 – 1914

In 1905, the Choir Vestry was built, the foundation stone laid by Bishop Arthur Douglas shortly before his death.

Alexander Gammie, Aberdeen 1909

Electricity was installed in the church in 1911.

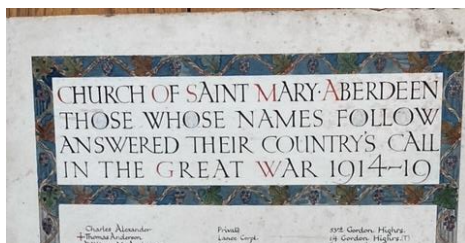
In 1909, St. Mary's was proposed as the site for a new diocesan cathedral. The church was described as:

One of the most picturesque ecclesiastical edifices in Aberdeen ... Internally the edifice is admirably adapted for a stately service.

*The Churches of Aberdeen,
historical and descriptive,*



1914 – 1924



Ninety-one men and four women from St. Mary's served in the First World War, and ten of those men died. After the war the congregation suffered a bad blow with the death of Canon Christie in December 1923.

1924 – 1934

After some considerable debate, a porch was added to the church, built of Peterhead granite, in 1926. Of all the additions suggested to the church in its early years this was probably the most practical – others included a baptistery and a campanile.



1934 – 1944



This was not one of St. Mary's best decades. In the Second World War, twelve members of the congregation were killed, including the Porter family in Bedford Road. In 1941 the Rector's wife, Edith Lightfoot, died of cancer, and in 1942 the Rector himself died after a short illness. No sooner was the new rector, Mr. Milne, in place than the church was bombed.

1944 – 1954

A busy decade of restoration and repair. The Green Organ was installed in 1946. The new foundation stone for the chancel was laid in 1950. The crypt was reconsecrated in 1951, and the chancel was rededicated in 1952. The roof had to be repaired after damage in the severe storms of January, 1953,

In other news, St Mary's won the Diocesan Youth Shield in 1949!



1954 – 1964



In 1956 the church purchased a car for the Rector for the first time. In the same year, the copy of Raphael's Madonna of the Pomegranate was purchased and installed, to cover a gap left by the rearrangement of the organ pipes.

In 1957, St. Mark's Church in Rosemount became the church hall, opened with a grand dinner (after considerable restoration).

1964 – 1974

The oil and gas industry started up in Aberdeen and the North East. St. Mary's welcomed a series of mostly American oil families who brought life and variety to the congregation. The Rectory, across from the church in Carden Place, was the social hub of the church. However, a succession of short incumbencies and sudden departures led to some uneasiness in the congregation.

1974 – 1984

The present rectory was purchased in 1976, and Rev. James Alexander was appointed, restoring stability.



1984 – 1994

The Piper Alpha disaster in 1988 shocked Aberdeen – the rescue involved helicopter pilots connected with St. Mary's.

1994 – 2004

The Millenium was marked around the world. In 2000, the current main organ installed, replacing the one damaged in the bombing. St. Mary's celebrated again in 2004 at our 140th anniversary, and two banners were made by members of the congregation to 'replace' banners brought by Rev. F.G. Lee from St. John's.



2004 – 2014



Another busy decade! St. Mary's hosted two Labyrinth events as well as Doors Open Day. Rev. Mlu Mbele, the rector of our sister church, St. Mary's, Mqanduli, came with his family to visit us. Our 150th anniversary was celebrated in style with a grand service.

A painting from Cyprus in memory of Susan Murdoch and her daughter Margaret Johnston was installed in the porch.

2014 – 2024

Perhaps again not the best of decades, with two vacancies. The Coronavirus pandemic closed all churches and drove worship mostly online, though St. Mary's Sunday Breakfasts on Zoom were popular. Amidst the various lockdowns, St. Mary's agreed to host the congregation of St. Andrew's Cathedral during its restoration work and was styled 'pro-cathedral'. A restoration fund enabled us to re-design our grounds as a Peace Garden, coincidentally eighty years after our church was bombed, and this area is already well used by the public.



GENERAL SYNOD 2024

This year's General Synod was held in Edinburgh a week later than planned, thanks to the arrival of someone called Taylor Swift in the capital. Whether this contributed to the uncharacteristically awful weather it's hard to tell!

As usual, the worship, from the opening Eucharist to the closing prayers, was vibrant and enthusiastic, and in between we dealt with business and debate in the usual generally courteous manner. This year the hottest topic was actually how we vote – over the last few years of online or hybrid synods an electronic voting system has been introduced, but last year a glitch allowed eight bishops to register a vote on one motion, when at most we tend to have seven. This year we were each allocated a numbered machine to use for voting, which made the whole process much faster and seems to be reliable. However, a plethora of short motions on Saturday morning, mostly relating to appointments to various committees, did leave us all with a touch of 'motion sickness'!



Much of the business this year related to canons coming before us for second reading, after they had been discussed at diocesan synods. These included Canons 15 and 16 which cover what clergy from other denominations might be allowed, under various conditions, to officiate or assist at our services; the effect of Net Zero requirements on Canon 35, the one that governs changes to our buildings; Canon 65 concerning safeguarding, which is undergoing a thorough update; and, in addition to the canons, some revised liturgies. All these went through after some interesting discussion. Net Zero cropped up again in a presentation on Thursday with the usual enthusiastic support coupled with bewilderment over how to insulate our Victorian buildings, even if we had the money!

The Provincial Youth Committee, moved from their usual Saturday morning slot to a space on Thursday, had much more chance to make an impact with their presentation as a consequence. One idea we took away which was particularly striking was to have a defibrillator fitted to the outside of St. Mary's – this will

be discussed by the vestry at some point soon. The P.Y.C. then led evening prayer beautifully.

The Mission Board also left us with some food for thought, not only in terms of how we might see our overseas missions in these post-colonial times, but also asking a very pertinent question – if your church disappeared, what would the local community lose? This led to some inspiring round-table discussions.

Synod was addressed at various points by Archbishop Leo Cushnie of the Roman Catholic Church, Mary Woodward of the Society of Friends, and other representatives of our guest denominations. They were able, too, to contribute to a last-minute debate on the SEC's response to the conflict in the Holy Land which proved both interesting and helpful.

Synod also marked, at various points, the retirement of the Provincial Director of Ordinands, Ian Barcroft; Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway; and John Stuart, Secretary General of the SEC for the last twenty-eight years. All three will be very much missed, though it is hoped they will not disappear completely from the life of the church.

As always, business ran alongside socialising and networking, exhausting and enjoyable, until it was time to catch our trains and return to our dioceses for another year.

GRATITUDE

“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”

Proverbs 16:9 NIV

I wonder just how many hearts have, over the years, helped plan the course for St Mary's? From the above verse from Proverbs 16:9 I would like to draw your attention to “the Lord establishes their steps”. Those words are the focus of this article. Gratitude for the Lord's guiding steps and pathways.

There have been many footprints left in the ‘sands of time’ during St Mary's history. My own ‘steps’ began with family members before I was born and my own steps into St Mary's began with my Confirmation (whilst being a member at St Clements). At a young age I saw St Mary's as a Church that gathered children from other Churches and brought union at a very significant time not only in their lives but the beginning of new footstep pathways in their own Church. Gratitude to all those who have and are continuing to encourage children's growth and footsteps.

We were recently on a trip to Haddo and came across these large foot imprints on the ground. My granddaughter's feet certainly didn't fill the imprint, nor did ours. This got me thinking, how do we know when we are walking in Jesus' steps? It would be easy to say ‘yes’, I am but

how truly are you and how truly were the generations before you walking in Jesus' steps? I believe they were, otherwise, we wouldn't be celebrating the 160th Anniversary of St Mary's. Surely, there was and is in the Church a union of the many parts of the body of Christ: for unity, union, putting Christ at the head and of course the Church as the bride stepping forward in faith following Jesus' steps to bring us to this milestone. Gratitude to those past and present.



The rebuilding of and continued maintenance of St Mary's would be just one example of following Jesus as He too rebuilt the Church when it was torn down. Jesus through His suffering established the resurrection steps that would reassure everyone that there is a New Heaven when they depart this earthly heaven. But firstly, before this journey they would be led in the footsteps of Jesus to establish their lives both in and outside of the Church building. 'Love thy Neighbour' springs to mind - we can't and shouldn't restrict our Love within Church walls but allow it to flow everywhere we go. After all, we found the footsteps in the picture in a garden amongst long grass, so I guess the question for myself and for you is where would your footprints be found inside and outside of the Church? Gratitude for all walking Jesus' steps in the world yesterday and today.



God's Blessings upon this day and the memories it will evoke. Jesus blesses little children ... plan your course with loving childlike hearts and Jesus' steps will be your pathway. Gratitude to Georgia for showing us how she shares her happiness and Love with others in the world and Gratitude to Georgia's parents for allowing me to share her pictures.

God Bless

Margaret McKinnon

P.S. I recommend a visit to the sensory garden at Haddo – it is a wonderful experience for all your senses and for all ages (you will have to look elsewhere for the foot imprint).

ST MARY'S SWIM TEAM (NOT OLYMPIC)



The Olympics will be over by the time you read this. We will have watched humans reaching their highest physical achievements ever and marvelled at their speed, fortitude and courage.

Spare a thought for two members of our group who show similar attributes as they brave the North Sea for minutes at a time in the pursuit of the most enjoyable way to justify a hot drink.

Where is the speed, fortitude and courage you may ask? Well, the courage is obvious, just dip your toe in the sea anywhere along our lovely coast and you will know it takes a certain sort of strength and determination to let that water above your thighs. Peeling off all our outer garments except our woolly hats, gloves, shoes and swimming costumes requires fortitude and some would say stupidity, but the same could be said of a lot of sports. The sea is there, so why not swim in it? This seems as reasonable as choosing to loop the loop with a bike or hit a ball back and forwards over a net.

There is drama too: it is quite a spectacle watching ladies of a certain age arrive in their quilted coats, laughing and chatting determinedly as they leave their belongings on the shore and wade into the North Sea clutching their flotation devices.

Yet it is all worth it, as we swim in the cold but supporting waters of Stonehaven Harbour. The sun glints over the cliff and birds come surprisingly close. We feel at peace with the world and exhilaration as our bodies respond to the cold.

Our new rule is to only stay in the water for approximately the same number of minutes as the sea temperature, so swimming is pretty determined as we are only in for an optimistic 20 minutes! Then, it is the super speedy exit into the fresh coastal air to our lovely coats and the delight of hot chocolate from our Thermos flasks.

Sea swimming helps us appreciate our beautiful coast and leads us into swimming in rivers and lochs whenever we can. It makes us notice the need for litter collection and protection of bodies of water and to love the detail of the sea animals and plants on the beach.

Courage, speed and fortitude are definitely required for this activity, so I propose this as a new Olympic sport from start to finish, including the hot drink.

We would also encourage you to put Aberdeen Beach Clean dates in your diary, then you can watch the dolphins and seals close to our city without even getting wet, but with similar appreciation of woolly hats and hot drinks.

Julia House

MCS Aberdeen Beach Clean:

21 Sept	North End City Beach	10.00
8 Dec	Donmouth north	13.00

SOUP / SOAP SUNDAY

Our Soap Sunday in June, where we collected soap, bath and shower gel, toothpaste and other toiletries for those in need, was very well supported, as you

can see from the photograph – more was added after this! These were all donated to the Cyrenians.



This was followed by our Soup Sunday, with tins and packets gathered on our charity pew by the Green Organ. Thank you again to all who donated.



PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

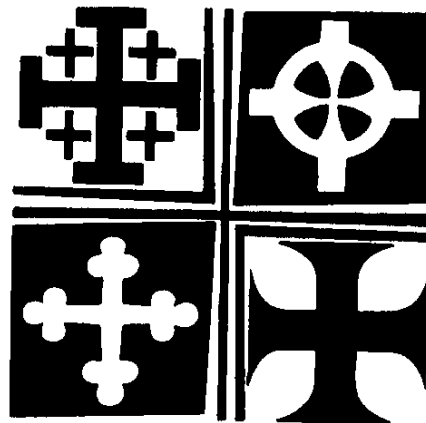
The 2024 Photography Competition started at Easter – why not take a few snaps on your summer holidays and give it a go? Not only are there prizes for the top shots, but twelve will be selected for the 2025 St. Mary’s Calendar, on sale in December.

SOCIAL EVENTS

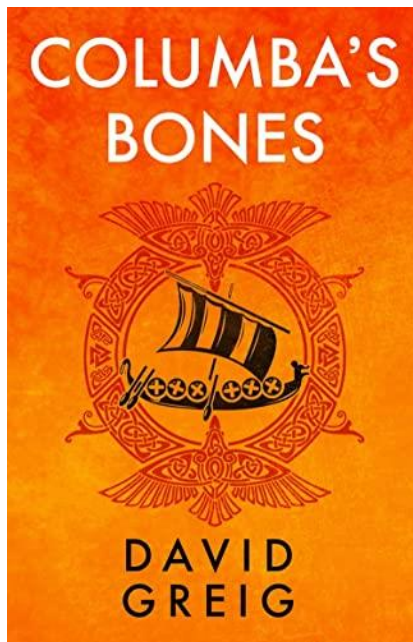


The Italian Night, the Cheese and Wine / Silent Auction (which made £360) and the Ladies' and Gents' Evenings were all quite well attended and far too much fun for too much photographic evidence. The Bake Sale brought in £54, and plant sales came to £122. Thanks to all who organised, donated or took part in all of these events.

Coming up, we have bring and share lunches for Harvest and of course a bring and share lunch for our 160th Anniversary service on 18th August, and there are other events planned. For the full schedule, take a look at posters around the church, or watch out for announcements on Facebook or the weekly service sheet.



BOOK REVIEW



David Greig, *Columba's Bones*: This is the tale of what happened on Iona after a Viking raid wiped out all the monks and other inhabitants, except for one young monk and the widow of the smith and, unexpectedly, one of the Vikings. It's a witty, coarse and lovely tale by turns, quick to read but with lots to think about, including what is service to God and what is martyrdom, and what, in the end, faith is.

If you have read an interesting book and would like to tell us about it, please contact the editor

ACCOUNTS

May 2024

Income:	3,896
Expenditure:	<u>3,452</u>
Net result for month:	564

June 2024

Income:	7,142
Expenditure:	<u>4,633</u>
Net result for month:	2,509

Balance unrestricted funds:	47,134
Balance restricted funds:	20,445
Balance at month end:	£67,579

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Rector: vacancy

Assistant Priests: Rev. Jason Hobbs, Rev. Roger Dyer (for pastoral matters please contact on 07719 458571 or revrogdyer@btinternet.com)

Rector's Warden: John Cooke

People's Warden: Iain Stewart

Vestry Secretary: David Rose

Vestry Treasurer: Lydia Ross

Lay Representative: Nicola Mills

Sacristan: Anne Farquhar

Organist: vacancy

Protection of Vulnerable Groups Co-ordinator: Graham Thomson

Flower Convener: (please contact Nicola Mills for now)

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Online: www.stmaryscardenplace.org.uk / facebook.com/stmaryscardenplace

The deadline for the next magazine, our Harvest 2024 issue, will be 30th September. Copy when required to Nicola Mills, or telephone 01224 488700, or e-mail to palaeography@aol.com. Thank you!

Your Magazine

You can order your St. Mary's News to be sent to you each quarter by e-mail, or ask for a Large Print version, or ask for any back copies of editions you may have missed. Just contact the Editor!

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Carden Place, is a charity (Scottish Charity No. SCO 14062).