

**ST TERNAN'S SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL
CHURCH MUCHALLS**

November 2025



Sunday Service 10.30am

Prayer & Chat Wednesday 11.00am

The church is open for private prayer during daylight hours

From our Minister



November is a time of remembering...All Saints, All Souls, and Remembrance Sunday all feature in our calendar. As the church year draws to a close at the end of the month, as with any year end it is a good time to stop and reflect on the year that has passed.

For me this November, as I retire on the 30th I not only consider this past year, but my time with you over the last 21 months and also my time as an ordained priest, and of course what lay before. At the heart of my ministry is the notion of God with us. Over the last couple of weeks, I have said that I think ministry is about standing in the gap between God and the people...in other words representing God to the people and the people to God. This however is not just the vocation of the priest. I truly believe that as Christian people it is all of our callings, even more so now than ever before. All of us as Christians are called to bring to God all of his creation, in prayer and also to bring God's love to his creation. Worship is wonderful, it can be inspiring, but what worship should do...be...is the food, the nourishment that allows us to be visible signs of God's love in this world. I say over and over again that we must be embedded in our communities. In other words, we must develop relationships with those outwith the church.

I came north with the label interim minister, that label underlined the theme of transition and change. There was an acknowledgement, I think of doing ministry differently, an acknowledgement that it was not about being a traditional parish priest but about trying to support the churches in reimagining the future. Tough stuff...change is never easy.

I know that I have not managed to live up to everyone's expectations. I know that in both charges that there have been difficult things to consider and decisions to be made however, I have tried to walk with you in making those decisions. Change we are told is never easy, and we witness that in our sisters and brothers of the Church of Scotland. It is difficult to see what lies ahead and here it is so important for all of us to remain faithful to our prayers, faithful to our relationship to God, faithful to each other, acknowledging that God may very well be, and I believe he is asking us not only to reimagine our own individual congregations but also the whole existence of the church. Some might say both exciting and terrifying times.

During my working life, I have done a lot of different things, in a lot of different places. I believe at the heart of who I am has always been developing relationships, some might say it was because I like a good natter or that I am intrinsically nosey...might be true. But here I would like to remember the moments of great joy, you know those moments when you are caught in a moment of sheer delight/cheer/bliss/connection, where time slips away and you if you take the time to notice may say that God is present. Those moments may be in times of great sadness, or happiness, moments of noise or stillness; for me in an empty or crowded church, at a hospital bedside, on the top of a hill, an early morning coffee sat staring out at the sea, holding someone or being held and most of all listening.

I have learnt much in my time with you, much about you and this place, but also myself. My understanding of God has changed, of course it has as I have grown and so in my parting I remind you of the phrase...God with us..., that is what I believe our journey of faith is all about, pretty simple really, the tricky thing is our remembering God's presence, acknowledging God's presence and about being faithful in our response. It's all about God with us....and so a prayer as we journey on...

God of our beginnings and endings, we celebrate all that we have shared and ask your blessing as we continue on our journeys. May the love that is in our hearts be a bond that unites us forever, wherever we may be. May the power of your presence bless the moment of our leave-taking, this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Amen

Mary

St Andrew and football - Canon Paul Hardingham

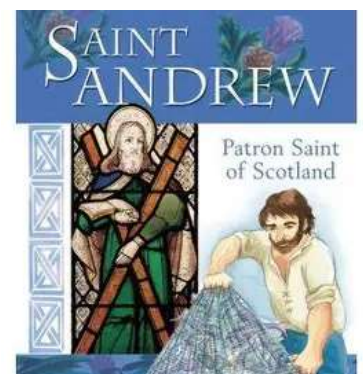
'Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I don't like that attitude. I can assure them it is much more serious than that' (Bill Shankley). When you replace the word 'football' with 'mission', this quote still has something to say! The apostle Andrew (we remember him on 30th November) demonstrates what the mission of the Church is all about (cf John 1:35-42). It's not unlike following your favourite football team!

When we support a football team, we make sure that we know all about them! When Andrew and his friend heard about Jesus, they wanted to find out more: *'Look, the Lamb of God.'* (John the Baptist, v35). The first stage of mission is finding out more about Jesus, the One who enables us to be friends of God through His death and resurrection.

Secondly, when supporting a football team, we will spend time watching their games. Andrew asked, 'where are you staying?' and Jesus replied, 'Come and you will see' (v39). Andrew spent the rest of the day talking and listening to Jesus. As a result of this time, he had something to share. How much time do we spend with Jesus, reading His word and praying?

When our team wins, we want to share the good news! After meeting Jesus, Andrew's first action was to tell his brother Peter: 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ)' (v41). Are we willing to tell others about Him too? Sharing with family and close friends can sometimes be harder than talking with strangers. However, we don't need to follow a football team to engage in mission. It's all about being excited to share Jesus with those we meet day by day.

'Mission is seeing what God is doing and joining in' (Rowan Williams).



Heavenly Father,

Here we are in November – the month of short, dark days. A dreary, difficult month, unless you have a birthday! Lord, it seems as if the world is permanently in November at the moment. So much is so difficult for so many people, through no fault of their own. And it seems to go on and on.

Lord, would You bring your healing light into the world's darkness. Bring transformation, compassion and a softening into the hearts of those with responsibility for the conflict and the suffering, that they might work for peace for all people. We know that nothing is impossible for you, Lord, so we pray in faith – and in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Bible Reading - a few thoughts from Ken Tonge

Some time ago, I think it was during an Alpha Course, the question was asked, "Does anybody here read the Bible every day?"

I was one of the few who could truthfully answer "Yes".

The reason for this is simple. Not that I pick up a Bible and read from it every day. But I subscribe to a booklet, "New Daylight" which presents one with a daily Bible reading (just a few verses), a commentary (a bit of analysis and a thought for the day) and a short prayer at the end. My day, every day, ends with this as a routine. George, I believe, starts his day with this same routine. We read a bit of the Bible every day.

Nobody has ever enquired as to what benefit this routine affords but some have dismissed it, implying it to be a waste of time.

So, I ask myself the question, "Am I wasting my time?" And the answer is "No".

The Bible is a history of Judaism and how it developed from an early form of monotheism, involving human sacrifice, then animal sacrifice and eventually into the Christian concept of self-sacrifice. It is clearly a very important set of books which is treasured by the church. So important that some (and I have known several) set themselves and completed the task of reading the whole Bible from beginning to end.

Readings from the Bible are a part of all our services. Sermons are preached based on texts taken from the book. Bible studies are a vital part of the church's programme of development. But attitudes towards the Bible are extremely varied throughout Christendom.

At one end we have the extreme fundamentalists who insist that the Bible is "The Word of the Lord". That is, that every word has been directly delivered to the authors by the Almighty and is therefore the absolute truth. So, we find churches where the creation

story is held to be authentic rather than the best explanation some ancient philosopher could think of. Any suggestion that the universe as we see it may be the result of a long evolutionary process is held to be untrue because it is contrary to the word of the Lord.

"----this I know, because the Bible tells me so" is a well-known phrase in a catchy hymn. In our own, Episcopal, church a more liberal view is held. In the 1950s there was considerable concern in church circles that fundamentalism was taking root in the Church of England. The debate was heated but for most Anglicans hermeneutics came to be regarded as key to understanding the Bible. So, one reads the Bible as the work of authors (all male one might assume) who wrote of what they saw and thought in the context of their own time. And in their time the world was, in some ways, rather different from our own. In an hermeneutical approach, when we read and interpret the Bible, we must take into account the social, historic context and the traditions and motives of the authors and editors.

It is an approach that I was led to adopt many decades ago when I was recruited as a Sunday school teacher. The vicar told me to buy a copy of Peake's Commentary for background reading. I thank him for that. I came to respect the erudition and integrity of the authors in the 1937 edition which I had at that time. I have updated with newer editions since and my opinion of the value of the work has not changed.

It was this more analytical view of the Bible that led our one-time priest, Rita Acarnley to rewrite the response to Bible readings. Instead of "We have listened TO your word" she had us use the less fundamentalist response "We have listened FOR your word".

Now, in recent times, in St Ternan's, there have been discussions as to which version of the Bible we should use in our services. There are so many variations, different translations, from the original language in which the books were written. The Bible is not an easy book to read. However, some translations are easier to read than others, using modern, colloquial language.

Then there is the question as to which religious texts might be included in the Bible, which is a collection of books, separate but related through history and subject matter. What writings to include in the collection is something that has been debated for centuries by academics. The book on our lectern does not include Wisdom, Sirach, Tobit, and suchlike, but these occasionally turn up in the lectionary reading lists.

So, in this liberal, indeterminate environment, our interpretations of bible stories may change as knowledge of authorship and historical contexts improves. Archaeological discoveries have reshaped our knowledge of the way the early church evolved. Thus we may find a more questioning attitude towards the way the Bible is used in modern church worship.

But to get back to the point. Do I benefit from reading "New Daylight" every day? The answer has to be "Yes".

"New Daylight" is contributed to by a wide variety of authors, most of whom appear to hold much less questioning views than my own. And each has a particular preference as

to which Bible translation they use. So, I am daily presented with something which is a challenge. Every day I am challenged to justify my own beliefs. Each evening, I am forced to think about what I have read.

I actually enjoy the challenge presented by reading alternative views and will often disagree with the writer's opinion. But it keeps the brain working. It is good to be reminded that there are other points of view, just as travel gives us insights into other cultures and religions whose history and literature are totally different from ours.



It is a practice that, properly controlled, breeds tolerance. I am daily reminded of the need for tolerance, to accept that there are other points of view. Agreeing to disagree but not falling out is what makes us loving neighbours. I think we would all agree that being a good neighbour is one of the most important messages that the Bible contains.

Bible knowledge

A minister was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I finally figured out what the Bible means!" The minister thought of his extensive theological library and smiled indulgently. He asked his young son what he thought the Bible meant.

"It's easy, Daddy," the boy replied. "It means: 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'"

19th November - Hilda, Abbess of Whitby

Hilda played a key role in the early English Christian church, and she may even have been the first to encourage the writing of Christian poetry.

She was born a princess, into the Deiran (Northumbrian) dynasty, and her sister became Queen of the East Angles, with whom the Deiran had connections. In those days East Anglia had close ties with the Gallic Church, and because of her sister, Hilda came under that influence. She was actually on her way to take her monastic vows near Paris when the Bishop of Lindisfarne, Aidan, called her back to Northumbria.

Back home, she went into seclusion for a time, before being sent to be abbess of a religious house in Hartlepool in 649.

Eight years later, Hilda felt moved to establish a religious community at Streasnaeshalch (later renamed Whitby). Her community was a royal establishment, a double monastery (both men and women) and became famous for its learning, with even five bishops trained there.

Whitby was also, of course, the venue for the famous Synod of Whitby in 664. With Hilda acting as hostess, the Synod met to decide upon the date of Easter. The issue at stake was greater than that, though, for the decision would sway the Church in Britain to adapt either the Celtic or Roman traditions. Although Hilda defended the Celtic church customs, she accepted with grace the decision of the Synod to accept the Roman date for Easter, and she then worked to unite the Church throughout the land.

The Nicene Creed: The Church and the Future

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

'We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church': The Creed affirms the four marks of the church, defining a truly orthodox Christian community:

one: despite the many different churches and traditions, there is only one Church to which we all belong. *'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'* (Galatians 3:28).

holy: the church is a holy community set apart for God (*ekklesia*, lit 'called out'), whose mission is to reflect God's holiness in worship and live out His love in the world.

catholic: this doesn't refer to the Roman Catholic church, as the word means 'universal', reminding us of the unity of the church across the whole world and all denominations.

The church aims to apply the same gospel in whatever situation, context or culture it finds itself.

Apostolic: The apostolic ministry of the church (*'apostolos'*) is one of being sent to communicate the good news of the gospel: *'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.'* (Matt 28.19).

'We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins': As baptism is as sign of belonging to the church, it can only happen once. The issue addressed in the Creed is that of Christians who left during persecution but wanted to be accepted back by rebaptism. It affirms the principle *'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'* (Ephesians 4:5). Today, those baptised as children, theologically can't be re-baptised to demonstrate an adult commitment. However, they can be confirmed or reaffirm their baptism vows.

'We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come': The Creed ends with a statement of hope, that we will share in Jesus' resurrection life after death.

It is not simply about the immortality of our soul, but the resurrection of our bodies. They will be transformed to fit us for life of heaven for eternity: *'The body that is sown*

is perishable, it is raised imperishable...it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.' (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).



When there is no peace - David Pickup

They dress the wound of My people as though it were not serious. "Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14)

I wonder what peace felt like in 1945, after 9th May or 16th August? These, of course, were the days after Victory in Europe Day and then Victory in Japan Day. Once the parties and hangovers were cleared up, life would go on as before, for many months to come: with shortages, rationing, men overseas, houses bombed and people on the move. On the continent and in the Far East it was much worse.

What does it feel like now? Yes, we have had 'peace' of sorts in most of Europe between the major continental powers for decades, which is an achievement, but there is no peace in Ukraine, the Middle East or Sudan. If anything, the world is now looking to be a more dangerous place.

This verse from the prophet Jeremiah was the theme of a sermon recently. The preacher talked about peace making, peace keeping and a lasting peace, which are not the same and require different skills. In and after the Second World War *peace making* meant winning the war and defeating evil. *Peace keeping* was occupying the defeated lands until they could establish communities built on democracy and justice. (The preacher was born exactly nine months after either VE or VJ Day, so he was a 'child of peace'!)

What about a *lasting peace*? Many world leaders say, "Peace, Peace" but they mean only *peace on their terms* and do not care about anything else.

As Christians we should:

Pray for the *peace makers*: the women and men in the forces
Pray for *peace keepers*: the experts helping to build new societies
Pray for *lasting peace*: the willingness of world leaders and politicians to act for the greater good.



Remembrance *By Megan Carter*

In November we come to remember
How war tore our country apart,
From village and town and all around
Men and boys left home and hearth.

Mothers and wives and sisters all
Saw their brave young men go away,
For some it meant the ultimate price
As they gave their tomorrows for our today.

Another Man left His home above
To rescue this world from sin,
It cost Him His life which He freely gave
So new life could enter in.

In this world there will always be war,
But the time will surely be
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

Praying With the Prayers of the Bible: when your prayer is not answered -

Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle

2 Cor. 12:8; 'Three times I asked the Lord about this ...*but...*'

Paul is talking about one of the most mysterious and one of the most baffling aspects of prayer – when God does not say yes.

On the face of it, Paul's prayer was very modest. For some time he had been troubled by 'a thorn in the flesh.' He doesn't tell us what the 'thorn' was and down the centuries theologians and commentators have made suggestions. Most of them have thought that the affliction was physical because Paul says it was 'in the flesh.' Some have suggested that he suffered from epileptic fits which caused him to fall down, while others have suggested that he was laid low by constant fevers or that he had very poor eyesight, the last based on his remarks in Galatians 6:11. But in spite of this great servant of the Lord praying earnestly three times that the thorn would be removed, God did not answer as Paul expected. A number of things in this passage (verses 7-10) are very helpful to all of us in the matter of prayer.

First, although God's answer was not what Paul asked for, God did answer him. God is never indifferent to the prayers we utter from the depth of our heart. Unlike the idol Baal in the Old Testament story about Elijah, (1 Kings 18) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus is not on a journey, nor is he busy elsewhere, nor is he sleeping. He hears our prayers and our cries when we come to Him in our need and pain and distress.

Second, although Paul did not get the answer he wanted, God made him a wonderful promise. He said, 'My grace is sufficient for you' (v.9). This was not what Paul asked for, yet what a promise it was! God said in effect. 'I will not take the thorn away – but my daily grace is all-sufficient.' In spite of the thorn, Paul will triumph. When God gives us all-sufficient grace, it will take care of everything in our lives.

Thirdly, Paul learnt that God's wonderful grace meant that in his weakness 'the power of Christ' (v.9) would be with him, the power that would make him effective and fruitful in his ministry.

Fourthly, this experience taught Paul that he could be 'content with weaknesses and insults' (v.10) because it was for Christ's sake, and when he is weak in himself, he is strong in Christ (v.10).

So, what about unanswered prayer? Unless our prayer was selfish and not for our good in the first place, God does answer our cry. When the answer is not what we expected, then it means that our loving Father has something for us even better and more important than what we asked for.

A. S. A. P.
always say a prayer

Hear, hear

A very deaf elderly man was finally fitted out with a hearing aid that really worked. A month later his doctor called him in for a check-up. "Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"



Last Month on the Facebook Page

5th October 2025

I heard this part of the bible in a recent sermon and the preacher reflected on it in a way that struck a chord with me. They pointed out that it does not say makes your enemies your friends so that you can love them. It says just to love them. They may always be your enemies, but you can still love and pray for them. Now, that is a real challenge. That is the great things about the bible especially with a good preacher, you are challenged to be something so much better. Not sure how easy this is going to be, but it is worth a try.



12th October 2025

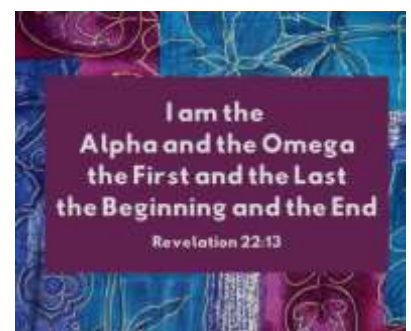


These words come from John Farnham's song the voice. They came on the radio as I was driving today. It was just after the news, so the words that I have picked out rang out loud. The song talks about us having choices and that's important because God gave us free will. We make the choices that lead to conflict. When that conflict is happening on the other side of the world it is easy to forget that the victims are all somebody, to lump them together under the heading of victim. Thinking about them as someone's brother or sister is much harder, but perhaps that difficult thinking is what is needed to

start seeing a better way.

19TH October 2025

It is tempting to think of God is an old man in white robes with a big, long beard. Sitting on a cloud in Heaven. Or perhaps as a woman, as played wonderfully by Alyanis Morrisette in Dogma. We do that, we imagine things in our own frame of reference, and we can sometimes think of God in our own image. God is so much more than that. God is everything, the start and the end of all things. So, if God built us in their image, what does that mean? It is certainly not physical characteristics. God is love and we were built to love. To love each other, to love the world, to love ourselves and to love God. Spread a little love today.





Talk to Jesus

When all hope is disappearing
And your spirit is so low
When your days are full of fearing
And you suffer blow on blow
There's a tried and trusted method
Which will ease all sense of loss
Just kneel and talk to Jesus
The one who died upon the cross

When deep shadows overcome you
And your heart's full of despair
When your life seems torn and tattered
And appears beyond repair
When you suffer great misfortune
And need lifting from a fall
Just kneel and talk to Jesus
Who died to save us all

For when you talk to Jesus
You'll not even have to ask
Because He knows your every need
And gives courage for each task
With Him life's long hard journey
Becomes easier every day
For He's the sturdy footwear
That helps you travel life's highway

By Colin Hammacott

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ROTA : NOVEMBER 2025

DATE:	CELEBRANT Assistant Address/Reflections	Readers/ Intercessions	Readings:	Sidesperson	Refreshments
02/11/25 TRINITY 20	Irene Butler Dee Foulds	TBA Sue Selway		Sue Selway	Sylvia/David
09/11/25 TRINITY 21 Remembrance Sunday	REV CANON MARY JEPP Irene Butler 	Sue Selway Dee Foulds Steven Coull Sheila Usher	HAGGAI 1: 15B: 2-9 2 THESSALONIANS 2: 1-5,13-17 LUKE 20: 27-38	Kaeden Mackay	Maureen/Mike
16/11/25 TRINITY 22	STEVEN COULL Sheila Usher	Kaeden Mackay Susan Edwards John Usher Dee Foulds	ISIAIH 65: 17-25 2 THESSALONIANS 3: 6-13 LUKE 21: 5-19	Steven Coull	Rhona/Katy
23/11/25 TRINITY 23	REV CANON MARY JEPP Dee Foulds	Rhona Vassilikos Sheila Usher Geoff Bell Sue Selway	JEREMIAH 23: 1-6 COLOSSIANS 1: 11-20 LUKE 23: 33-43	Irene Butler	Sylvia/David
30/11/25 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT St Andrew's Day	JOINT SERVICE AT ST JAMES 10.00am				
07/12/25 2 ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	BISHOP ANDREW Irene Butler	Carol Masson Kaeden Mackay Steven Coull Sheila Usher	ISIAIH 11: 1-10 ROMANS 15: 4-13 MATTHEW 3: 1-12	Sue Selway	Carol/Rhona/Katy

CHURCH CLEANING SUE SELWAY NOVEMBER 2025