

Formartine Parish: Pitmedden Kirk Newsletter 12th January 2024



When Storm Arwen struck over two years ago, we lost a lot of trees. Most were 'just another tree in the woods', but one or two had special significance, to me at least. This one had a sheltered bit at the base which nurtured daffodil bulbs. They were always the first to bloom in the spring, and I took great delight in following their progress, even although there must be 1000s of other daffodils nearby.

The trunk that was left was about 4 metres high, and I clung to the hope that, at best, it might survive as a tree, and even if it died, that it would continue to protect the bulbs at its base. So I left it standing as a bare, limbless stump. The daffodils flowered in the first spring, but have not done so since, not even putting up any leaves. They were maybe better than me at recognising when something is over, dead, no longer fit for purpose. Just a few weeks ago, I took the decision to fell the trunk. It was rotten and bits were falling off. I was concerned that my grandchildren might get hurt.

We all tend to cling to the past, to remember good times, even to see things through rose-tinted glasses. Sometimes we rightly take a wee while to adjust, to get our head round changes, to accept things that we cannot – and possibly should not – alter. That may involve an attachment to a building, a relationship, a certain way of doing things, or a long-held opinion. May we, in 2024, have courage and take the opportunity to acknowledge, but leave behind, those things that will hinder us as we move forward into the future that God has for us, as individuals, as families and as God's church.

You might like to try 'Pause',



an App designed to help you do just that and take a minute or two each day to rest in God's presence.

Please send in anything for the newsletter that you think deserves a wider audience – diary items [including services/events in Formartine Parish], information, good news, a short article, offers of assistance, requests, prayer points. What do you want us to include? elainemoff@aol.com

SUNDAY'S SERVICE 14th Jan

The service on Sunday is at 10am in Pitmedden Kirk led by Rev Dr Alison Swindells, followed by coffee.

Duty elders: Anne Grant and Muriel Milne

Readings: Genesis 28:10-17, John 1:43-51

Sunday's service will be available live on Zoom, and a recording will be on our Facebook page.

Zoom link:

<http://us02web.zoom.us/j/87120275292?pwd=hOEhJS0pPa0tvcE90VVBxMXIrMVF5UT09>

Meeting ID: 871 2027 5292

Passcode: Udney

You can link to Zoom and Facebook directly from our website www.uppc.org.uk



Would you like to be part of the team that does the readings in church each Sunday? Or would you like to be involved in some other way in the life of the church? There are many areas where you and your unique gifts could really contribute to our services and life as a church family. Please speak to Elaine elainemoff@aol.com

We will be collecting an **offering** each week during the service. Please also remember that giving by **direct debit** is an easy way to give regularly to the work of the church, and if you pay tax, then **gift-aid** allows the church to benefit from additional funding. You can give regularly or as a one-off directly into the church bank account: 82-63-10 80485504. The name of this account changed on 1/1/24 to Formartine Parish Church. Members and adherents should have received a letter with more information. Please speak to your elder if you did not get the letter, if you want to discuss gift-aid, or if you have any questions.

The Giving Table will be happy to receive anything that can be 'sold' and spare produce – veg, fruit, baking, flowers, eggs, etc. – that you may have. Donations will go to church funds. Don't forget to 'buy' items, too!

It would be helpful to those who make our coffee each Sunday if you could bring your **own mug**. Thanks.

There is a **diary** near the notice boards at the back of the church. If you are planning a meeting or event in church, please fill it in to ensure that we don't double-book and so that the heating can be programmed appropriately.

Formartine Parish Church

We are now Formartine Parish Church of Scotland: Pitmedden Kirk! As well as a combined Session, which has had it's first meeting, various teams with specific remits have been set up and are already functioning well, taking care of the practical and spiritual aspects of our united congregations as we move forward together into a shared future.

These are:

- Worship
- Pastoral care
- Communication and IT
- Administration – Data protection, Safeguarding, Rolls, etc.
- Property

- Finance

We have identified team leaders and some members, but would be delighted if you wanted to serve on a team. We need people with an interest or a skill, but mostly with a willingness to get involved. Please contact Alison aswindells@churchofscotland.org.uk

Opportunity for Service - An upgrade to the IT system will be installed week commencing 15 January to ensure compatibility with Tarves and a training on the use of the new equipment will be held on Saturday 20 January 9.30am at Tarves. We are looking for volunteers to join the team. If you can serve in this way, even on an occasional basis, please come along to the training or if you cannot manage the training speak to Elaine or Alison

Our **website and Facebook** pages will be updated soon – watch this space!

Have you moved house recently? Got a new phone? Changed your email address? We are trying to **update the information** we hold on members and adherents, so that we can keep you informed and get in touch if we need to. If you think we might be behind the times, please contact Alison Bruce as soon as possible alisonbruce10@gmail.com

News from Caroline and the Formartine Youth Partnership

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year. We had a busy end to the year with involvement in several activities across the churches and schools. Thank you to the many individuals who gave up valuable time to help make them possible. Our Walk-through Nativity for P1-4 (varied slightly in some schools) was very popular and we received some very positive feedback from the children and schools involved and their parents. Alison, Val and I were delighted to lead end of term Christmas School Assemblies in Tarves, Methlick, Barthol Chapel and Pitmedden and all 577 young people (including Udney Green) received Christingles to take home. The Gingerbread villages looked fantastic once again – so much creativity and thank you to everyone who got involved. We were particularly pleased with the involvement from the local youth organisations/groups and several local businesses joined in the fun. The light switch-on and carols were popular events and well attended. Our Christmas Children's Club on 23rd December welcomed almost 40 children for an afternoon of Christmas crafts, games, snacks and we watched the popular 2009 film The Nativity starring Martin Freeman. We raised approximately £175 for FYP. Thanks to Aberdeenshire Local Community Partnership Funding we are delighted to be offering a 15-week targeted 'Emotional Wellbeing Program' of support designed by 'Transforming Lives for Good' to small groups of P7s in Tarves, Methlick, Pitmedden & Udney Green Primary schools running January - April. Please feel free to contact me with any feedback, questions, ideas or if you are interested to learn more about any of the events/activities. Kind Regards, Caroline

Alpha news from Jeannie Price

We wanted to let you know that we are running another in-person Alpha course in the New Year, and would really love you to support it. The course is going to be held at the Coffee Apothecary in Udney on Wednesday evenings from 7pm – 9pm starting on January 17th. We're really excited about what God can and will do through Alpha and look forward to this next Alpha chapter.

How might you support it?

Firstly, through prayer – please pray for the team leading the course, those invited to come along and every aspect of the catering and technical “stuff”.

Secondly, by promoting the course and inviting people along – the vast majority of those who attend Alpha come along because of a personal invitation. We're willing to come and do a short Alpha plug, if appropriate, during a Sunday service or your Session meeting.

And thirdly, through supporting us financially. The cost of running the course and providing a meal and coffee each week for guests is expected to be in the region of £4, 000.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch. alpha@methlickparish.church

CHURCH DIARY

The church diary will include events and services scheduled both in Pitmedden and Tarves Kirks. Please let me know if you want anything added, or would like to arrange car share.

Sun 14 th	10am services in Pitmedden and Tarves Kirks
Tues 16 th	<i>mainly music</i>
Wed 17 th	Boys' Brigade from 6.30pm in Udney Green Hall
Wed 17 th	7pm Alpha @ The Apothecary
Sat 20 th	9.30am IT training at Tarves Kirk
Thurs 28 th	Youth Café
Sun 21 st	10am services in Pitmedden and Tarves Kirks
Sun 28 th	10am joint communion service @Tarves Kirk
Tues 30 th	7pm Worship team meeting at the Manse
Sat 3 rd February	8.30am Big Breakfast. Last orders 10.30am
Tues 20 th	7.30pm Session meeting

We have a **Pastoral Care Team** who are available to contact and/or visit anyone in the parish, on request. Please contact our Minister, Alison, if you know someone who would benefit from this ministry.

Please continue to pray for those who have been bereaved recently: Alan and the Rae family, and Linda Smith, whose father, Slessor Troup, died on 4th January. Also remember Margaret Stanley, Jen's mum, who was in hospital over Christmas and is scheduled for surgery at the end of the month.

INFORMATION

Our Minister, Rev Dr Alison Swindells, can be contacted at swindells@churchofscotland.org.uk or on 01651 851295

Scottish Charity Number SC006056