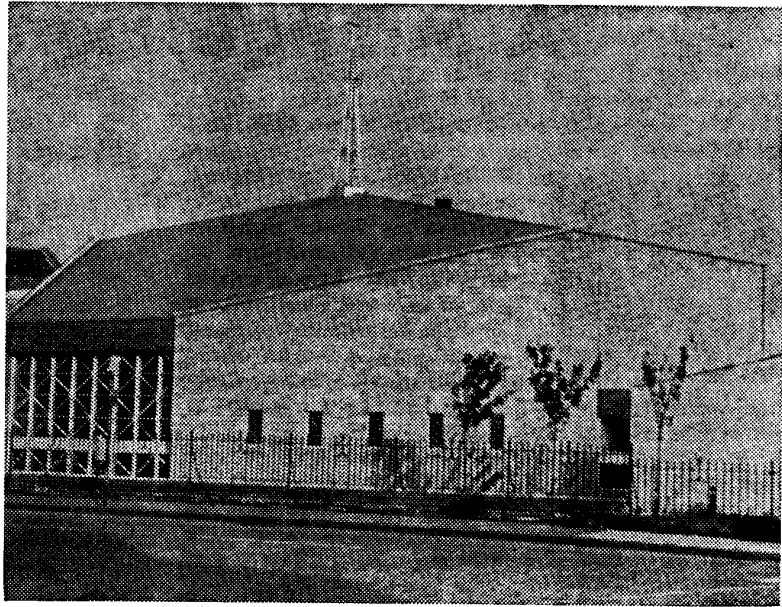


# *'Echoes'* of **ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH KIRKCALDY**

No. 15

June, 1982



## *Are We In a Rut?*

By The Editor

**DURING A SHORT** sermon preceding the Sunday School's Open Day, our minister, Mr McNaught, to quote his own words, "Put his head on the chopping-board."

But in reality it was a long-overdue challenge—whether the congregation, Board, or Kirk Session for that matter, agree with him.

His sermon on "Children and the Church" revolved around the urgency to do away with the present stereotyped 11.15 a.m. service and make it more a family affair every week.

Again he compared the American outlook and approach at Rev. Cal Cooper's church in America where Mr McNaught spent ten weeks last summer during an exchange visit.

He told how the four back pews of the church were reserved for parents who had very young children, especially babies and toddlers. The idea was that the parents could slip out and in with the children without too much fuss and too much obvious disturbance.

The idea was so popular that scattered throughout the church as well were mums and dads with youngsters—right down to the second-front pew!

If there was any disturbance—and that didn't happen often—Mum would dive into a "baby-bag" beside her on the pew, or at her feet, and produce a bottle to soothe a crying child. If necessary she simply slipped out during the next convenient hymn to another part of the church until peace and calm was restored.

Youngsters even attended Communion Service. Beneath the bookboards of the pews, beside the wooden holders for the Communion glasses—exactly like our own—were pencils to be used by the children to scribble on paper brought along by their parents.

Mr McNaught remarked, "By the end of my admittedly-short time preaching there, I had ceased to notice the children, so unobtrusive had they become. And this is the pattern all year round."

### WHAT ABOUT THIS IDEA?

Yet room for more thought!

In this American community, the Church School, equivalent of our Sunday School, PLUS ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL, is held in the winter session between 9.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. Following a coffee break, the main service is at ten-thirty, again attended by parents and children alike. Thus every service is a family service in the strict sense of the word.

Mr McNaught added, "I cannot help comparing it to our lack of enthusiasm here in this country, where we are almost forced to have the Sunday School at the same time as the main service in order to combat transport problems.

"If our counterparts in the American Mid-West can get themselves into church during the winter—and some come from as far as ten miles away in much worse weather than we have experienced recently—I honestly think we in this country ought to be thinking again about our long-held patterns and times of worship, which have become almost a fetish in their right."

Naturally, Mr McNaught had more to say than this. But surely this in itself is sufficient to give food for such thought. Certainly, the Kirk Session and the Congregational Board should be discussing his suggestions. But, above all, what do the congregation think?

Do we just keep moving in our old set ways, or accept the challenge and move into the Eighties with fresh ideas that could bring a new pulse to the life of St. John's?

# A Strange Experience

The Manse, June, 1982

Dear Friends,



**IN THE PAST** three months I have had occasion to return twice to my former parish of Portpatrick, Wigtownshire. A very beautiful week's holiday after Easter was followed by a quick visit at the end of April to assist in the conduct of the wedding of a girl who was only

four years of age when I was inducted to Portpatrick in 1968. How time flies!

Going back now is a strange experience. On the one hand, I have the feeling I have never been away, so timeless and tranquil is the setting. On the other hand, I cannot help noting some changes, both in the people and in the physical appearance of church and village.

I was very happy there, but I could not now go back permanently, even if such was possible or desirable. There is no way I could turn the clock back to the years 1968-75, to recreate the people exactly as they were then; to restyle church and village in the same way. No way could I restore the atmosphere and the particular circumstances causing my life to turn out the way it did during that period. It was no mistake to go back; only, I have to realise how things and people have changed, and it's as well to leave it at that.

## GOING BACK AND LOOKING BACK

Going back and looking back can often be serious mistakes.

Sometimes when people retire they move back to their birthplace, or some place with especially happy associations, in the fond hope of recreating and recapturing those happy times and pleasant links. More often than not they are bitterly disappointed when they realise time has moved on and it all can never be quite the same again.

In our congregational life we have recently been obliged to look back, because of the Presbytery Quinquennial Visitation held in the latter part of February. We were forced to review the years 1976-81; to search out statistics, financial and otherwise, and generally "take see ourselves as others see us." I'm glad to be able to tell you we have been passed with a clean bill of health! The Presbytery sees nothing in our congregational life to warrant interference from any higher court of the Church. We have been congratulated for making the best and fullest use of the buildings in our possession, and particularly for the way in which we coped with the situation facing us in the aftermath of the events of 1975.

Our statistics are good, with special attention focussed on the Communion attendances, which have shown a steady increase over the five-year period in question. Our youth work is reasonable, and we have met all our financial commitments in full, both local and national. It is to be sincerely hoped that such positive trends continue in this vein for the next five years at the very least.

One word of warning; we are exhorted by the Presbytery to guard against complacency, because things have gone so well for us. A timely and just warning, which I hope all of us will take to heart in our future endeavours.

Looking over the last five years or so has, in this instance, been helpful; not always the case.

Remember how Lot's wife looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt.

Remember how St. Paul said the only way to win the race was to forget what lay behind (Philippians 3, 13).

In the truly Christian life there can be no going back to the state where we allowed our commitment to be controlled by forces opposed to God. The newness of Christianity is total, and does not trail shreds of the old life along with it (see Mark 2, 21 and 22).

## LOOK AHEAD

Now it's time for looking ahead. Perhaps a summer holiday is coming near, with all the valuable rest and refreshment such a time brings.

Perhaps as leaders and committee members of our organisations, plans are already being made for next winter's session of activities and speakers.

Perhaps as an individual you are looking ahead to some new experience to enrich your life.

So be it. I believe that maybe the time for looking back is over. As a church we should stop saying at every point of decision, "That's the way it has always been done . . ."

As individuals we should control our yearning for a golden age of the past, which probably exists only in our imagination.

As a world we should stop trying to live by material values of power and prestige, when so much needs to be done to alleviate suffering and deprivation in all their hideous forms.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever . . ." the writer of Hebrew tells us (Chapter 13, 8).

If we must look back, then let it be with this classic statement uppermost in our minds, to smash our complacency, to help us make a realistic assessment of our needs and problems of the present, and so to shape the future in accordance with God's will.

May this summer period be one of happiness and health for all of you.

Your friend,  
SAMUEL M. McNAUGHT.

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## FAMILY AFFAIR

MR McNAUGHT will be on holiday from July 5th to 31st. On Sundays 11th and 18th the preacher will be his brother-in-law, Rev. Douglas Phenix, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, St. Peter, Minnesota, who with his family is to be in this country on holiday during the latter part of June and most of July. It was with considerable difficulty that Mr McNaught resisted the tempting invitation to supply the pulpit of St. Peter during the Phenixes' vacation!

On July 25th, Rev. J. R. Fulton will be the preacher, and he will also undertake any pastoral emergency which may arise during Mr McNaught's holiday period. His address is 8 Bennochy Gardens, and his phone number is 200012.

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## New Elders — Warm Welcome

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 13th, some new Elders will be ordained and inducted to the Kirk Session. They are:—

Mr Alan Campbell, 17 Hendry Crescent; Mr James Marshall, 91 Kennedy Crescent; Mr William McCrow, 26 Bennoch Avenue; Mr Robert Thomson, 2 Caymanes Terrace, Octavia Street; Mr Gordon Spence, 93 Ralston Drive; Miss Rosemary Cox, 68 Dunnikier Road, Mrs Patricia Duffin, 26 Townsend Crescent.

Mr Thomson and Mr Spence have had previous experience of the eldership, in Pittenweem Parish Church and Churchmount Parish Church, Lochgelly, respectively; all the others are newcomers to the elder's office. We welcome them with their differing talents and skills, and look forward to the valuable contribution they will undoubtedly make to our ever-changing congregation.

Some readjustment of elders' districts may well take place in the autumn, as a result of this influx of new blood to the Kirk Session.

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## B.B.'s GOOD SESSION

THIS HAS BEEN another successful session for the Boys' Brigade.

During that time they have won a number of trophies.

In the inter-platoon competition they gained their first award by winning the Pentathlon Shield, which involved Bible knowledge, drill, swimming and athletics.

On the football field they proved equally their prowess gaining the Fife Cup in the inter-company football competition. They brought off the hat-trick by "bringing home" the Spring Football Cup in the inter-platoon senior competition.

This month, a week-end camp was held and the annual summer camp will be to Kingswells in July.

The Junior Section had a very successful parents' night on May 6th.

They, too, were in the honours list, having won the pennant for the highest Christmas appeal collection in the Mid-Scottish district.

This same section also came second in a Mid-Scottish drama competition, while the Robins' parents' night will be held shortly.

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## GUILD OUTING

THE WOMAN'S GUILD outing to the Candle Works at Newbridge, after which the ladies went on to Dunbar for a meal, marked the end of a varied and interesting session.

For the Guild to continue on the successful lines it did in former years, new members are needed, and a warm invitation is extended to all ladies interested.

The new session starts in September, and meantime the committee hope that all members have a very enjoyable time during the summer months.

At this time our thoughts go out to our members who are ill and unable to participate, in some cases, in normal activities. It is hoped they will be able to join again in all the activities of the coming session.

New vice-president is Mrs Margaret Jackson.

## Get-Together Growing

ONE OF THE interesting features of the "Get-Together," which meets every Thursday afternoon, is that several men have now become members. Attracting men to the club has been slow compared to the response by the ladies, but numbers now indicate this barrier is being broken down and that the games and entertainment, plus the opportunity for chats is achieving the response aimed at in the first place.

The hard work and ideas put into practical use by Mrs A. Duguid and her helpers has contributed in a large measure to this success, and once again they are indebted to the car drivers who give so willingly and freely of their time to make the Get-Together a possibility for a good number who otherwise would be unable to attend.

Though it seems a long time away now, on the Thursday nearest Easter it was decided to put on "something special" that afternoon. Several of the ladies decorated hats, which were a source of amusement and admiration. One of the men was so "taken" by the hats and the time and effort the ladies had put into this task that he dashed home for his camera to take some colour photographs.

Miss C. Kerse sang some beautiful songs accompanied by Mrs M. Blewes. Mrs Duguid had arranged with Mrs Avril Moodie to bake some sponge cakes shaped as Easter bonnets with little eggs on the brim, and these were very much appreciated.

Some of the cakes were taken to Forth Park Hospital Geriatric Ward and were much appreciated.

It is hoped again to continue during the summer months as this proved so successful last year, proving there is an obvious need even in good weather for a gathering such as this.

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## JUNIOR SPORTS CLUB

Leaders Margaret and Walter Simpson write

"VERY ACTIVE Tuesday evenings, from 7—9 p.m., including badminton, snooker, darts and table tennis and a continuous cafe. Numbers varied between 12 and 26.

"As a club we joined the Fife Union of Youth Clubs and participated in the darts and table-tennis competitions, both held in Glenrothes.

"We finished the season with a barbecue supper at a country cottage by Kingskettle, where a rifle-range and log-sawing were part of the programme.

"This active group needs staff and will cease to continue in the autumn unless you, the congregation, will give your support in the way of time, energy and service."

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## Summer Services

OVER THE SUMMER months of June, July and August there will be one morning service only, at the revised time of 10.15 a.m., as it was last year. The only exception will be Communion Sunday, June 20th, when there will be two services, at 9.00 a.m. and 11.15 a.m. On that day there will be NO afternoon service, nor will there be an Evening Thanksgiving Service at 6.00 p.m.

A Thanksgiving Service will be held the following Sunday, June 27th, at 10.15 a.m., at the conclusion of which there will be a short Celebration of Communion for those who may have been unable to attend the two services the previous week. This short Communion Service will begin at approximately 11.30 a.m., and cards will be required.

## Christian Aid Lunch

THE CHRISTIAN AID LUNCH organised by the projects committee brought in over £100.

This consisted of soup followed by bread and cheese, and those taking part were invited to give a donation equivalent to what they would have spent on a meal at home.

It was intimated from the pulpit that Christian Aid collections in St. John's Church area realised £167.

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## TOP OF THE KIRK

HARD WORK by the Projects Committee ensured "Top of the Kirk" attracting a good audience. Representatives from organisations in the kirk made up the teams, and some persons, who wish to remain anonymous, made up some intriguing questions for the teams battling it out on the stage.

It's the sort of competition that should become an annual favourite, and one in which fresh volunteers from the organisations should willingly come forward.

This year the Kirk Session won the contest, and each member proudly took home a "Top of the Kirk 1982" trophy to mark their prowess—or was it just their luck in the questions they drew?

Without a doubt, the atmosphere was provided by Trevor German who, with his electronic scoreboard, kept the audience and the teams up to date as the competition progressed throughout the night. Trevor put in months of work beforehand to ensure smooth running of the competition, and a special word of thanks is due to him.

The same goes to Mr David Winton who acted as question-master, while Mr S. McNaught and Mrs M. Simpson were there to give final decisions on answers that were near the mark and could be accepted, while others just had to fall because they were that bit off.

Half-way through the competition, there was a break for tea, welcomed by competitors and audience alike.

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## CONGRATULATIONS, DAVID . . .

THE CONGREGATION will be interested and delighted to know that Rev. David Taylor, son of Mr and Mrs James Taylor, 21 Grieve Street, will be inducted to his first charge on July 13.

David, who at present is assistant at Tron Moredun Kirk, Edinburgh, was unanimously called to Maison Dieu Church, Brechin.

David is still a bachelor, but his parents, along with his sister, Ruth, will be helping him to settle into his first manse and also attending his services, especially during the summer months.

## . . . AND JIM, TOO

REV. JAMES BROWN, whom all will remember so well as the popular assistant Mr McNaught had for a year, is being ordained as assistant minister at South Leith Parish Church this month. Jim's happy connection with St. John's is a period not only he, but members of the congregation, will remember with warmth.

To both these young men—the very best in the years ahead.

## SENIOR BADMINTON

AN ENJOYABLE SEASON was had by all 24 members. The club did not enter the Kirkcaldy Badminton League this year, being content with friendly matches against St. Marie's, Y.M. Barony, Woodmill and Kinghorn.

Play was enthusiastic, often going on beyond 11 p.m.

The club resumes in September.

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## CHURCH NOTICES

### AT REST

"I am the Resurrection and the Life"

By Keeper of the Roll DAVID WINTON

February 8—

Mrs CHRISTINA WILSON, 12 Regent's Place, Balfour Street.

March 15—

Mrs B. SCOTT, Denend House.

March 22—

Mr RODGER, 2 St. Mary's Road.

March 29—

Miss M. ROSS, 3 Salisbury Street.

April 5—

Mrs SOUTAR, 67 Kennedy Crescent.

April 27—

Mrs GRAHAM, 82 Meldrum Road (latterly Barrogil Nursing Home, Cluny).

### Removed by Certificate

March 1—

Mrs LOW, 72 Katrine Crescent, to Torbain Church.

### WELCOME

#### Admissions by Profession of Faith

March 14—

Miss CHRISTINE BEALL, 44 Winifred Street.

Mrs MARY LAPSLEY, 353 Forthview.

Mrs IRENE HUNTER, 76 Dalmahoy Crescent.

#### Admissions by Certificate

February 16—

Mr HARRY and Mrs EUPHEMIA REID, 66 Kennedy Crescent, from Inverness.

February 22—

Mrs J. Rafferty, 17 Scotsraig Place, from Methilhill.

March 1—

Mrs P. BEVERIDGE, 56 Mellerstain Road, from St. Columba's, Glenrothes.

May 1—

Mr and Mrs G. TORRIE, 81 Glenbervie Road, from Burntisland and Dalgety.

### MARRIAGES

"Whom God hath joined together"

March 20—

SYDNEY TAYLOR, 47 Adamson Avenue, to ANN McMILLAN, 63b Allison Street.

May 15—

STEWART McQUEEN, 49 McIndoe Crescent, to LORRAINE MORDEW, 8 Whyteman's Brae.

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