

Welcome:

Welcome to our Enews update letter. We are hoping to keep all in our congregation up to date with what's on and what's happening in and around the Church. The letter will contain the latest intimations announced in Church. We will also be looking for stories that you think will be of interest, anyone who would like to contribute can do so by

sending their story or news to info@meldrumandbourtiechurch.com. You will have two options on how to receive the newsletter:

- 1) We will publish the newsletter on our website
- 2) sign up and receive each issue via email.

We hope you will enjoy reading our Newsletter and

look forward to hearing your comments, stories and suggestions.

The Kirk News will continue to be published and will have all its usual news and articles.

This Issue's Scripture Reading:

Ephesians 2: 4-10.

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ —by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Upcoming Events:

Christmas Craft Workshop

Saturday 24 November
Morning: 10am -12noon
Afternoon: 1pm – 3pm
At Meldrum Church Hall

Learn how to make:

- Felt wreaths
 - Felted robin brooch
 - Cut fruit – Thai Style
 - Iris folded cards
- £10 per session
all materials supplied.

St Andrew's Day Ceilidh Dance

With Scottish Dance Band:
'Ceilidh Mor'

To be held in the British
Legion hall Oldmeldrum on
the 30 November
Starts 7pm – 11pm.

Check our Facebook page
for more details.

Fischy Music coming to
Meldrum in November
More details soon.

[Presentation to
Gordon
Presbytery:](#)

As reported in our last issue we presented the story of the life and work of our churches here in Meldrum & Bourtie to Gordon Presbytery on Tuesday 2 October.

We used the 9 wonderful embroidery works hanging in the Church, depicting the life of our local Saint to guide our story throughout the evening. Our Minister, Rev A Jaffrey, narrated St Nathallan's story linking the short presentations covering; our works in worship, outreach, property and fellowship given by Elders. The Full presentation can be downloaded from our website. St Nathallan's story can be read below.

[The Life of
Nechtan
/Nathallan](#)

Written by Rev A Jaffrey.

Any kind of research into the early history of Scotland is fraught with difficulties. When I came



IONA PILGRIMAGE 2019

**Rev Alison Jaffrey and Rev Carl Irvine
are planning to lead a short pilgrimage
to Iona on 24th –27th April 2019**

**We will be holding a meeting for all those
interested in joining us on our trip to Iona.**

**This meeting will be held on
Thursday 8 November in Meldrum Parish Church
starting at 7pm.**

**We will be discussing the itinerary, cost and
payment options**

**For those interested in joining Alison & Carl
please forward your name in the first instance
to:**

Alison: 01651 872250 or email

AJaffrey@churchofScotland.org.uk

Or:

Billy: 07968 000610 or email

info@meldrumandbourtiechurch.com

website: www.meldrumandbourtiechurch.com

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here I knew there was a local saint called Nathallan. His name is remembered in place names and in a half-remembered legend. I have long wanted to know more about this saint but could not find him in the Saints of Scotland book. As an old archaeologist, I have connections however. My friend Graham found him in the Aberdeen Breviary the oldest printed book in Scotland. From the new translation by Alan McQuarrie, and from the local legend I have put together this story that is celebrated in our embroideries and which is our guide through tonight's worship and presentation. As with all stories from the deep past not all the details are secure and it is impossible to validate some of the claims made but it is certain that Nathallan was a real person though it turns out that Nathallan was not his real name but a Latinised form of a Pictish name. There is also the possibility that there were several people whose life stories were condensed into Nechtans and that some of the hagiography which surround him was added for the edification of the worshippers rather than as actual history. When Nechtan's story was written

there was no discipline of history as we know it now.

The story begins in the early 600s at Tullich, near Ballater where a boy called Nechtan was born beside the Dee. He was born to a noble family but made his life's study the word of God and the contemplation of the Divine. In order to keep his soul pure from the temptations of an easy, rich,

life as an academic land owner, Nechtan became a farmer. Not a gentleman farmer, but the hands dirty, hay in your hat and nicky tams kind of farmer.

His crops flourished. He was good at farming, but a terrible famine came to the land and Nechtan gave away his seed corn to stop his family and neighbours from starving to

Church Notices and Intimations:

Joining the Church Family: If you would like to become a member of our Church family or would just like to find out more about the work we do in and about our community please contact the Minister.

A Loop System for the hard of hearing operates throughout the Church

Large Print hymnbooks are available in the vestibule. Please return them to the vestibule after use.

Hospital and home visits: Please let the Minister or your Elder know by giving them a completed pew card as you leave the church or pass your request to your Elder.

Inverurie Food Bank: we are providing a collection bin for donations to the Inverurie Food Bank. Items should be of non-perishable food and basic toiletries. The bin will be situated in the vestibule. Please give generously.

Gift Aid envelopes (white) are at the end of each pew for members and visitors to use. By using an envelope – if you are a tax payer – and filling in the details – your offering benefits the church even more and at no extra cost to you! If you normally give by standing order, but are putting some loose change in the plate, please consider using one of these envelopes!

Click here for this week's Intimations:

www.meldrumandbourtiechurch.com/intimations



Meldrum & Bourtie

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death. When Spring came he had nothing to sow in his parks but sand. From the sand he sowed across the land every kind of corn grew and multiplied until there was a huge harvest waiting in the park.

In Meldrum the story is slightly different. Nechtan's crops survived a blight that killed everyone else's around and so he could feed his family and neighbours.



In Meldrum the next part of the story is that Nechtan's crops eventually died too and he realised how he had become arrogant and proud of his agricultural skills and that he felt that God had



abandoned him and so lost his faith.

The Aberdeen Breviary story is slightly different. Nechtan gathered a large number of his neighbours to bring in the miraculous harvest but a whirlwind and a huge storm kept the reapers from the field. Nechtan shouted at them in anger and shouted at God for sending the storm. The reapers and neighbours began to murmur against God and lose their faith in his goodness.

Nechtán realised his folly and in repentance shackled his leg with a padlock and set off for Rome to do penance by visiting the shrines of Peter and Paul.



In Meldrum the story is that he shackled his arm rather than leg but in both stories he threw the key to the padlock into the Dee before leaving on his pilgrimage. He set off for Rome.



In Rome Nechtan went to visit the holy shrines and prayed to be forgiven for his lack of faith. The Aberdeen Breviary and the Meldrum story now mingle again. In Rome the saint encountered a fish for his tea. In the Breviary he is sold the fish by a poor boy. In our embroidery he is in the market buying the fish. When the fish was cut open the key that Nechtan threw in the river fell into his hand. Taking this as a sign of God's forgiveness Nechtan opened the lock and walked free of his penance in joy. The Pope, on hearing the story, sent for Nechtan and made him a bishop, much against Nechtan's will.





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Nechtan came home and founded three church communities at Tullich, Cowie near Stonehaven, and here at Bethelnie.



There are records of Nechtan as the abbot of a monastery called Nir, which was thought to be Deer but now is thought to be more likely Fetternear which is close to Kemnay. In the Celtic Church abbots held more power than Bishops and the church was more often located in a monastic settlement than in any great



Cathedral power centre. So, we have assumed that the first church at Bethelnie was such a monastic centre which

would have had its own High Cross and would have been a centre of education and sanctuary for the whole area.



The Aberdeen Breviary records January 8th as Nechtan's Day and the date of his death in the year 679. In Meldrum his death has a story attached to it which is rooted in the past but still grows into our present.



Rumours of a terrible plague came to Nechtan at Bethelnie and he set out on a pilgrimage of prayer around the whole area. On his knees he prayed that this whole community should be spared from the

plague. His prayers left a Pale of Protection where he passed and no one here died of plague. However, the exhausted saint collapsed underneath the Parcock Tree and died.

The Aberdeen Breviary records that his body was buried at Tullich where he was born but in Meldrum, Nechtan/Nathallan is remembered by the continuing presence of a Parcock Tree. The present tree can be found just off the by-pass. It has a bench under it and a spring nearby and is a place of peace overlooking the present village which replace Bethelnie as the main centre of population in the area. There is a plaque recording the story of the saint's death and it is a good place to pray for this community. Our saint was a faithful farmer and a hopeful sower of the seed of the Gospel. We can aspire to continue his tasks and keep our faith no matter how it is challenged by circumstance and to give our lives to the service of God in this place.



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Our embroiderers on their
next project:

