



# St John the Baptist Scottish Episcopal Church Perth

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August and September 2019

# Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends,

I hope you are having a great holiday season. Where ever you travel too this year, please remember to bring and pass on warm greetings from St. John's with you.

Although it has been a little quieter over the past couple of months, it was a joy to have Bishop Ian with us for our Patronal Service in June. His warm and prayerful presence I know, was greatly received by you all. What a joy that day too when the Bishop renewed Rob Mackay's licence as a Lay Reader among us and in the diocese. We are richly blessed indeed. I look forward to sharing in ministry with Rob as time goes on.

By the time you will receive this edition of Quest, I will have visited like others in the congregation the Shetland Isles this year. I'm looking forward very much to bringing your greetings to the community of SOLI (Society of Our Lady of the Isles) as their Warden, as well as spending time and praying with the Sisters in that special place.

Wherever you go, be it far or in this beautiful part of the world, may the peace of God go with you.

Much love,  
Graham.



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# Services in August and September

## *Weekly Services*

Sunday 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday 10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Thursday 11 a.m. Communion, coffee and a chance to chat

## *Special Services*

1 <sup>st</sup> September	9.30 a.m.	Matins
15 <sup>th</sup> September	6.00 p.m.	Evensong
29 <sup>th</sup> September	10.30 a.m.	Harvest Festival
29 <sup>th</sup> September	6.00 p.m.	Nitekirk

## Organ Recital

Following a recital by Geoff Bolton, which was much appreciated, there will be a recital on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 6 p.m. by Alexander Wallace. Alexander left Glenalmond College this summer, where he was a music scholar, and will be going to St Catherine's College, Cambridge, as Organ Scholar in October. He will be playing works by Bach, Vierne, Langlais and others. Those who heard his recital in St John's Kirk earlier this year will be aware of how talented a performer he is. It promises to be an excellent concert and I hope it will be well supported.

David Willington

# Rob Mackay

Rob Mackay has a rich family heritage: Highland crofters, Irish immigrants to Glasgow and Presbyterian ministers. His parents served in the Royal Navy and he grew up in Chatham. After boarding school he read Modern History at Oxford and trained as a social worker in Aberdeen.

He covered several aspects of social work, including mental health, and then turned to criminal justice, and in particular, following a M.Sc. at Edinburgh University, mediation, bringing victims and offenders together. He lectured at Dundee University in Social Work and researched the theme of restorative justice. He then worked as Youth Justice Co-ordinator for Perth and Kinross Council. He also became involved in research and development of restorative justice in Europe and further afield. After a short spell as an associate professor at the University of Newcastle, Australia, not a happy time for him, he practised as a family and community mediator in New South Wales. He gave evidence to Australian commissions on institutional child abuse.

At this time he was experiencing a change in his religious life. He had been brought up a Roman Catholic, and then for many years he had been a Quaker. However, he became increasingly drawn to Anglicanism and in due course was licensed as a Lay Liturgy Assistant and Lay Preacher. He also became involved with the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis.

By this time his children had returned to the UK and he and his wife Amanda decided to return to Scotland and Perth, where they had lived before. In Australia Amanda had worked with families with learning

difficulties, a career-long interest. She has also qualified as a yoga teacher.

Now Rob has been licensed as a Lay Reader in the Diocese. As he remarked: 'We are now living experimentally in retirement. It has been great to find a spiritual home at St John's.'

David Willington



# Sermon

## **Reflections on Galatians 5: 1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62**

### **(Pentecost 3)**

I wonder what you think Freedom means. How do you think it is to live freely, as God commanded and intended us to do? What does Freedom mean to you and how do you apply it in your life? The most obvious meaning of Freedom is the ability to do and say whatever we want, without interference and from any authority or institution or, in fact, from any other human being.

Our lesson today from Galatians tells us that ‘For Freedom Christ has set us free’. What does this mean? The Freedom that St Paul writes about is in contrast to the ‘yoke of slavery’. Sin is slavery because we lose our freedom to do good. In sin, our failures crush us. The more laws we break, the more the law will break us. We become discouraged with our lack of progress and our ability to be the kind of people we think we ought to be. In sin, we are locked into a yoke, unable to do anything but repeat the same cycle of failure, shame, trying harder – and then more failure comes our way. Paul was writing to a persecuted people. How he longed that they would be free. How he agonised that they should come to know the truth. Paul is telling them that, if they will let the Holy Spirit guide their lives, they will not follow the ways of sin. We Christians must follow the Spirit’s leading, allowing Christ to fill every part of our lives, every moment that we are given.

Following Jesus, as you well know, is not just saying prayers and going to church. Jesus wants to resurrect us from a life that leads to death to one of holiness and fruitfulness. We cannot do this alone. We must learn to listen to the Holy Spirit and let the Holy Spirit turn us away from sin and

towards God. Our enslavement to sin is forever broken as we share His broken body and drink the blood he shed. We are free in Christ, free to do good things and not to indulge our desires to have power over other people, free to be, as Christ was, an agent of reconciliation and love. Remember: ‘Perfect love casts out fear.’

Jesus loved the whole world, including those who rejected him. This is the ultimate freedom, to love those who do not love us, however hard that may be. Freedom to love our enemies is empowered by the Holy Spirit. It cannot come from our own willpower. But we can practice this kind of freedom when we are filled with the Spirit that Paul talks of, manifesting its fruits: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness and self-control.

Little did the disciples know that say that they would soon become nomads on this earth, travelling all over, with no fixed abode, living in hostile and often frightening circumstances. But they were pilgrims, because pilgrims have a final destination, namely in eternity with God. We too are pilgrims, because we follow Jesus and that takes us into new ways of living, following the Spirit’s lead. Only those who are free in Christ can live out the fruits of the Spirit. Amen.

Graham Taylor. 7.vii.19



# Sunday Lectionary

## **August 4 Pentecost 8**

Psalm 49. 1-11

Colossians 3. 1-11

Luke 12.13-21

## **August 11 Pentecost 9**

Psalm 33.12-22

Hebrews 11.1-3, 12-22

Luke 12. 32-40

## **August 18 Pentecost 10**

Psalm 82

Hebrews 11. 29-12.2

Luke 12.49-56

## **August 25 Pentecost 11**

Psalm 103. 1-8

Hebrews 12.18-29

Luke 13.10-17

## **September 1 Pentecost 12**

*Matins: Psalm 105.1-15*

*Acts 18.1-1*

*Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23*

Psalm 112

Hebrews 13. 1,1-8,15-16

Luke 14. 1,7-14

## **September 8 Pentecost 13**

Psalm 1

Philemon 1-21

Luke 14.25-33

## **September 15 Pentecost 14**

Psalm 51. 1-11

1 Timothy 1. 12-17

Luke 15. 1-10

*Evensong: Psalm 119.(73-80)81-88*

*Acts 20.17-38*

*Mark 8.27-38*

## **September 22 Pentecost 15**

Psalm 113

1 Timothy 2. 1-7

Luke 16. 1-13

## **September 29 Harvest Festival**

Psalm 126

1 Timothy 2.1-7

Matthew 6.25-3



**Thanks!**

You may remember that this year Christian Aid challenged us to rise up against climate change, whose impact we can no longer ignore. We read how, when their home in the Philippines was devastated by a typhoon, Mary Ann took up fishing. Our donation will go some way to have her and her family better prepared for the next devastating storm.

So very many thanks to all of you who supported St John's Christian Aid fund raising in 2019. Including gift aid donations, we raised **£714.37**.

And here is another fund-raising event organised by the local Christian Aid Committee. Great fun last year – Graham K-R, Gordon & Hazel Mutch, and Bruce and me all enjoyed it!

Elaine Cameron

## **QUIZ NIGHT**

**Friday 30 August 2019 – 7pm**

Letham St Mark's Church Rannoch Road, Perth  
Teams of up to 4 people – come as a group or turn  
up by yourself and join a team!

£5 per person, including refreshments, payable on  
the night.

# Buggy Club

## Last Day at Buggy Club!

These two youngsters first attended Buggy Club when only a few months old and they have been an important part of our Tuesday mornings here at St John's ever since.

They have played well, learning to share toys and help each other, they have painted, made many craft items and constructed all manner of sets with playdoh and lego.

AND they have met Santa each year!

More than 4 years have gone by and how we shall miss them when our new term starts. They are beginning primary school and we send our best wishes and lots of love with them for this new stage in their lives.

David and Joyce





**After a busy day take a short time out to relax and reflect, enjoy tea and cakes, have a chat and listen to what is happening in our community and further afield.**

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August at 5.30pm  
at St. John the Baptist, Princes St. Perth

**ALL WELCOME**

# Temptation

*Matt.* vi 13: ‘And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil...’

There is a current controversy over the meaning of this sentence in the Lord’s Prayer, since Pope Francis has declared that ‘It speaks of a God who induces temptation. I am the one who fails. It’s not Him pushing me into temptation to then see how I fall. No. A father does not do this. A father helps us up immediately.’

‘Temptation’ is a translation of the Latin *tentatio* or of the original Greek *peirasmos*. It does not mean temptation in the trivial sense, for example, debating whether to have a second chocolate biscuit with one’s morning coffee. Rather it means a test – ‘tried and tested’, as in this passage from *Ecclesiasticus* (2.5): ‘For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.’

‘Deliver us from evil’. In the Greek, *tou ponerou* means either ‘Evil’ (neuter abstract concept – abstract nouns have the definite article in Greek) or ‘the evil one’ (masculine personification). The latter interpretation would coincide with the story of Christ’s temptation in the Wilderness by the Devil. Ardent Christians wanted to identify with the sufferings of Christ, to withstand the test, as he did, even though that might lead to martyrdom. St Paul welcomed his trials and tribulations as they brought him closer to Christ. Yet Paul must have had in mind *Psalms* xli. 1-2: ‘God is our hope and strength and a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.’

However, there is no doubt that the Greek verb *eisphero*, used in Matthew, means ‘lead’ or ‘bring’. The text of Matthew, as we have it, and similar passages in Mark (xiv. 38) and Luke (xi.4), must not be taken out of their historical setting. In the New Testament, composed in the century after the Crucifixion, there is the underlying theme of the Second Coming of Christ, the ‘End Times’, when He will come again in judgement. This

can be implied in some of Christ's utterances and parables, such as that of the foolish virgins. The destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem in AD 70 was seen as a prelude to a universal cataclysm within the lifetime of some of those who knew Christ. I *Pet.* iv.12: 'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial (*peirasmos*) which is to try you...But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.' Similarly, *Rev.* iii. 10 acknowledges the forthcoming ordeal: 'I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation (*peirasmos*), which will come upon all the world and try (*peirasai*) them that dwell upon the earth.' This is the theme of Michaelangelo's painting at the altar end of the Sistine Chapel: 'The Last Judgment', where Christ (muscular, unbearded, and not at all the gentle Jesus) has his right hand raised to signify his verdicts.

It is therefore understandable that we pray that we be not led into judgment, weak vessels that we are, since by our very nature, derived from Adam's Sin, we are nearly all rightly destined for perdition. In Calvin's view, only the Elect, chosen by God, will survive the test: 'For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.' (*Eccles.* xii. 14).

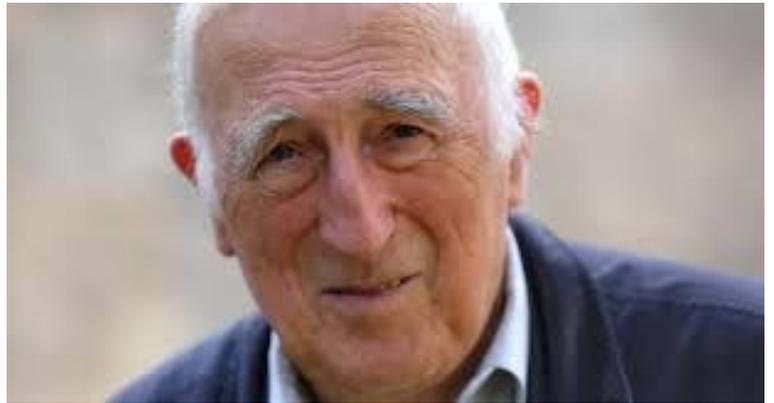
No one could possibly disagree with the Pope's statement that God is a loving and forgiving father. But Love and Forgiveness are much harder concepts to put into practice in a hostile and censorious world than Judgment and therefore Punishment. The messages that we receive from Scripture are decidedly mixed. Pope Francis urges us to embrace the twenty-first century AD, rather than the first.

David Willington

# Serendipity and Jean Vanier

A number of years ago I was travelling south on the train when I fell into conversation with some fellow passengers. They turned out to be two volunteers from the first ever L'Arche house in Scotland in Inverness, with one of their co-residents. They proceeded to tell me all about the house and the now worldwide L'Arche community, founded by Jean Vanier. Their enthusiasm inspired me to find out more about this exceptional, charismatic and holy man whose ideas and experience have changed the way people with learning difficulties and other mental handicaps are viewed and treated by society.

Jean Vanier, who died earlier this year aged ninety, was the son of Major-General Georges-Phileas Vanier, a Canadian soldier and diplomat, hero of the First world War who became Governor General of



Canada. In 1942 Jean entered the Navy, but by 1950, affected by, among other things, the atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he decided that he wanted to work for peace not war. He was in fact increasingly drawn towards a more spiritual life and did try his vocation as a priest but ended up after a period of study teaching Philosophy at the University of Toronto.

The big break came when he visited his friend who was chaplain to an institution for men with mental handicap at Trosly- Breuil in France. This was a really dreadful place but Jean felt drawn to the men, sensing their feelings of anger and abandonment and need to give and receive love. He began travelling about visiting psychiatric hospitals and institutions as well as families where a member had a mental handicap and concluded that people with mental disabilities were the most oppressed and humiliated in the world and that he must do something.

What he did was pretty extraordinary – he invited just two deeply damaged men to come and live with him, to share his home. From that experience he learned so much - about anger and violence in ourselves as well as others, about pain and suffering, but about faithfulness, respect, authentic loving relationships, and above all that everyone, especially those with mental handicap, is precious and equal in the sight of God, and deserves our love and respect.

By 1968 his home, L'Arche (the Ark) had become a community, where volunteers and people with mental disabilities of all faiths and none lived together, contributing in equal measure to community life. The movement quickly spread and now there are L'Arche communities all over the world. They are extremely happy places and volunteers who spend time living there find their lives changed.

And now for the other piece of **Serendipity**. When I worked at the Citizens' Advice Bureau, I had a colleague, Alan, a quiet gentle man who was a Catholic. His religion meant a great deal to him, and he was also generous and keen on ecumenism. He invited me to join his house group whose members met for study and prayer in each other's houses, and I found this both inspiring and supportive. They were so welcoming and even arranged for one of their priests to say a requiem mass with the group for my father, who had just died. And so it was that I received the opportunity to go with some of them to Dundee and hear Jean Vanier speak on Reconciliation. It was a huge affair in the Caird Hall, the atmosphere was powerful, and I shall never forget the presence of this lovely gentle and deeply spiritual giant of a man with his message of love and acceptance for all. I hope I may never forget the lessons I have learnt from him.

Ruth Harris

# Street Pastors

Perth Street Pastors started in 2007 with the aim of helping people on the streets of Perth during the night time economy and started with 16 men and women. We currently have 28 Street Pastors. We also have 7 School Pastors and 4 Response Pastors.

Street Pastors go out in Perth on Thursday and Saturday evenings and also on Friday evenings during December from 10pm until 3.30am and we are there to listen, care and help people of all ages and nationality, no matter their circumstances or beliefs. We give assistance to folk in need and chat with them about a whole range of issues. Our youngest member is in their 20s and the oldest is in their 80s, so age is no barrier! A chat in the street can sometimes be a turning point for someone. We had one occasion where we talked to a young lad who was considering ending his life, but after we talked to him he realised that life was worth living. We reunited him with his pals he had parted company with earlier on and he was grateful to us for spending time with him and helping him get himself sorted out.

We have over 14,000 Street Pastors in the UK and in Perth last year we completed 102 patrols totalling 1575 volunteer hours, calmed 66 aggressive situations, dealt with 184 vulnerable situations, administered First Aid to 7 people, arranged transport home for 39 people, had to call 2 ambulances, issued 101 pairs of flip flops, collected 405 bottles, had 150 faith related conversations, 41 prayer requests and had 670 occasions of spontaneous thanks.

Our School Pastors go into Perth Grammar School over the lunch hour on a Friday and we interact with the pupils and staff as well as the community around the school and we attempt to meet the personal and well being needs of the people that we engage with.

We have just started Day Pastoring for certain events such as Scone Races and we patrol the streets from 5.30pm – 10.30pm and are finding a real need for our presence on these evenings.

How can YOU help? The three P's! You can pay for us by becoming a friend of Perth Street Pastors and donating £5 a month to help us fund the training and uniforms and the cost of the Lollipops etc that we hand out. You can Pray for us, or even better you can participate by become a Street/Day/School Pastor. How do I do this? Just contact me by email [ggloudos@aol.com](mailto:ggloudos@aol.com) or give me a call on my mobile 07840867674. The more people we have the bigger the difference we can make!

We also have people who are willing to come and speak to Churches/groups about Street Pastoring. If you are looking for speakers we would be happy to inform you about what we do.

I would encourage you to take a step out in Faith, come out of your comfort zone even if you are not sure about becoming a Street Pastor and come out on a patrol with us as an observer (no strings attached) and find out for yourself if you feel you would like to join us. We will be holding training in Perth in the near future. If you can make yourself available God will give you the ability!

Gordon Loudon, Chairperson of Perth Street Pastors.

## Annie Hughes

Annie Hughes will be made a Deacon at a Service in St Ninian's Cathedral at 12 noon on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2019. Annie would be delighted if as many members of our congregation could be there to support her.

Rev. Canon Graham Taylor

# Hospitality

I saw a stranger today.  
I put food for him in the eating-place  
And drink in the drinking-place,  
And music in the listening-place.  
In the Holy Name of the Trinity  
He blessed myself and my house,  
My goods and my family.  
And the lark said in her warble;  
Often, often, often  
Goes Christ in the stranger's guise,  
O, oft and oft and oft  
Goes Christ in the Stranger's guise.

*A Rune of Hospitality*

## From the Editor

Thanks very much for everyone's contributions to this issue and to those who helped prepare it for printing and distribution. Please hand in or email all items to the Church Office for our October/November issue by

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

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