



St John the Baptist
Scottish Episcopal Church
Perth

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October and November 2020

Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends,

I hope you are keeping well and keeping your spirits up, despite the ongoing times that we are living in. When will things ever be back to normal, and indeed what will the new normal that I keep hearing about look like and be for us all?

However, we must press on with what we have and what life has become for us at the moment; all we can do is live each day and take it as it comes.

Many congratulations are sent to Annie this month on her Ordination to the Priesthood. I know this will be nothing like any other Priesting service I have attended, and sadly, due to restricted numbers, it will be by invitation only from Annie. We are hoping to be able to live-stream the service, so do keep an eye open for these details. I know this will be exceedingly difficult for Annie having to choose, but I do urge you in all things to keep Annie, David, and their family in your prayers. This is a significant journey in her life and ministry and we are blessed with all that Annie has offered us at St. John's in the past and I for one, along with you I know, look forward to sharing this part of the new journey with her.

I am incredibly grateful to the Bishop and Vestry for agreeing and allowing St. John's to be open once again for worship on a Sunday. This will be restricted due to numbers and social distancing. However you can read later on in this edition of Quest as to how our booking system will work for Sunday worship and what some of it will look like. I am indebted to Judy, our Vestry secretary, for agreeing to oversee this. I hope to have the 8.30am Prayer Book Holy Communion service followed by the 10.30am Eucharist. Cleaning will have to be done between the two services, but thanks to the Vestry agreeing to purchase a Fogging machine this should be a little easier for us. The services themselves will be quite different, but it will be so nice to be able to offer something once again

after all of this time. For those among us who will find it difficult or uneasy to gather in Church, then we do hope to live-stream the Sunday 10.30am service, which will of course replace the pre recorded ones we have had up until now.

Among all things, I want to thank you for your prayers, sustaining me through a difficult time and above all for your patience. The journey we are on is not an easy one, but step by step we will continue on together, with Christ as our guide and companion.

If you need to know anymore or ask anything, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

God's peace and blessing to you all,

Graham

Canon Graham

Weekly Services

The church building may still be closed but weekly services are available via the church website. www.episcopal-perth.org.uk or a link on our Facebook page.

There is also a weekly prayer meeting on Zoom. For further details please contact Rob Mackay at the church office; 01738 634999.

All being well there should be 8.30 am and 10.30 am services from 18th October 2020.

Reopening for Congregational Worship

As you know, the church has been open for private prayer on Tuesday mornings for some weeks. All precautions in place are in compliance with rules issued by the College of Bishops, following Scottish Government guidelines. A number of parishioners were pleased to take advantage of the opportunity; the clergy and stewards gained useful experience and felt it was well worth doing.

Now, under Phase 3, we are permitted to open for congregational worship, subject to capacity restrictions and the same safety precautions. This we propose to do on Sunday 18th October.

Service times and format Services will be held at 8.30 and 10.30 a.m. as before. Thanks to an accredited sanitiser/spray device (already in use by the Cathedral and other congregations), the church can be sanitised between services. There will be readings, a sermon, prayers, and music, played on the organ, though we cannot sing together.

Capacity and booking system The two metres distancing requirement means that we can only accommodate 35 households at a time. This includes two clergy, two stewards and the organist, and we want to allow two places for unexpected visitors. This leaves only 28 places for members, so it will be necessary to book in advance. However, a couple will count as one place, and if you come as a family unit or other social bubble you can sit together taking one pew. **If you wish to attend either service, you should notify Judy, preferably by email, otherwise by phone or text (details below), by 5 p.m. on the preceding Friday, in the first instance Friday 16 October.** If you miss the boat one week, you will be given priority for the following one. Please say if you can't negotiate the steps to the gallery. If you turn up without booking, you will understand if we are unable to let you in.

On arrival A welcomer will greet you and check your name on the list of attenders. You will need to wear a face mask inside the building, use the hand sanitiser provided and pick up your service sheet and liturgy book. You will be directed to your pew, filling the front pews first.

Access and exit A one-way system will operate. Please enter by the main glass door and exit along the corridor into the yard. Wheelchair access will be possible along the corridor as usual and a wheelchair space available. Please stay in your seats until invited to leave. The pews on the south side (Threshold) will exit first, then north side, then galleries. Take your sheet and liturgy book with you. Once outside please don't cluster round the entrance. Sadly, we can't provide refreshments at this stage.

Communion Communion will be taken in one form only, the bread, which is a valid communion. Kneelers at the communion rail have been removed and you will stand. If you can't come up to receive, the celebrant will bring it to you. You will be directed to the front by the stewards, starting from the back, and sanitise your hands before receiving. You will be reminded of this procedure before it starts.

Collection There will be a plate at the back of church for you to leave an offering, but we would prefer you to donate by BACS or standing order if possible. Please contact Peter (details on back page) for more information.

Toilet You may use the toilets in the Threshold if necessary. Please wipe down after use with the wipes provided and tick the boxes on the record sheet.

Services online The service will be live-streamed from a camera in the choir gallery, so those who are unable to attend and have the technical facility can watch it online, and afterwards on the Facebook page or the website.

It seems a lot to take in, but you will be reminded of the procedures from time to time during the service.

Judy Norwell (for the Vestry)

T: 01738 626789

E: mailme@kinnoullhill.co.uk

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Si Quis

Whereas Annie Hughes, a member of this congregation, has applied to **Ian, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane**, to be admitted into the Holy Order of Priests, and the Bishop has appointed the **SECOND** day of **OCTOBER, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY** for that purpose, this is to give notice, that if you, or any of you, know any just cause why the said person should not be ordained, you are hereby required to declare the same to me (or to the Rector of this church), or to the Bishop aforesaid, ten days at least before the day fixed for the ordination.

Wedding

Ours was never going to be a conventional wedding and, with Covid-19 restrictions, the wedding we got wasn't even the wedding we had originally planned. But we loved every minute of it.

And we are very grateful to Graham for readily agreeing to our unusual arrangements.

On 1st August 2020 the wedding party departed from the top carpark at Cairngorm for the walk into Coire an t-Sneachda. Five households the permitted limit so it was a select few but the people we most wanted to be there.





The Coire is quite high at a little over 900m and so the conditions could have been challenging but fortunately we had blue sky and sunshine for the ceremony.

Graham and Annie had put together a lovely service for us. It was, for us, a perfect and joyful occasion.

Cath Bodrell

Chris Cook



Christian Aid

Letter to St John the Baptist Church, Perth

Ref OR240621

3 August, 2020

Dear Mrs Cameron,

Please thank the congregation of St John's Episcopal Church in Perth for their donation of £1400 towards the work of Christian Aid. Around the world, coronavirus affects us all, but love unites us, and we are grateful for the love you have shown this Christian Aid Week 2020. With your help we may respond to the pandemic and work with our local partners to protect communities from the virus. One example of our work is Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, which is home to more than 850,000 Rohingya people. In this overcrowded refugee camp, physical distancing is impossible. One in three of people living in the camp don't have enough clean water or soap to wash their hands.

Thanks to the money you have raised, we'll be able to train over 100 healthcare workers in Cox's Bazar to fight this virus, and ensure they are equipped with personal protective equipment. We'll also build handwashing stations throughout the camp, and deliver hygiene kits and soap to 50,000 people. In this way, we will help strengthen people to find their own solutions to the problems they face.

Very well done, everyone - a superb effort!

I wonder if you remember that last year the first Sunday of Advent was declared Christian Aid Sunday. Under Robin's tutelage, we sang the carol *When out of Poverty is Born* written by Kathy Galloway, encouraging us

to think of those giving birth, like Mary the mother of Jesus, in the poorest and most difficult circumstances.

Recently several Scottish newspapers (including the Herald, P & J, National) have been writing about the havoc created by the desert locusts in Ethiopia. They are swarming so badly they are devastating crops and land. Southern Ethiopia is already badly impacted by the coronavirus epidemic, and could see major food insecurity if the locust problem escalates. So Christian Aid is making this the focus of their Christmas 2020 Appeal.

Why not join me in researching local newspapers for articles about the swarming Ethiopian locusts before Advent?

Elaine Cameron



Back to School

A year ago I couldn't have imagined that I would be asking pupils to use hand-sanitiser on arrival and to put on face-masks before leaving the classroom. But that is now an established part of the new routine along with pupils wiping down desks and chairs at the start of each lesson.

The staffroom lies empty and I miss break time chats with my colleagues. The school is quieter at break and lunch times as the pupils are required to go outside once they have eaten. And on rainy days they come back in a wet and bedraggled bunch.

In previous years I have envied PE teachers their freedom to be outside in the sunshine on good days. Now I am grateful for the comfort of my classroom as PE takes place outside whatever the weather.

In many ways school is functioning fairly normally. We are following the complete timetable with full classes. It was a bit of a jolt to go from having very little contact with anyone for several months to now be encountering up to 150 pupils every day. I try to keep my distance which makes teaching difficult. I cannot go and sit beside pupils who are struggling – either with the work or with their behaviour. I now have the 'consultation station' - a desk at the front where a pupil can come and put their jotter down for me to look at and then give advice from a two metre distance.

But it is good for the pupils to be back in school. Long may it continue.

Cath Bodrell



Sunday Lectionary

October 4 Pentecost 18

Eucharist. Psalm 19, Phil. 3.4b-14, Matt 21.33-46

October 11 Pentecost 19

Eucharist. Psalm 106. 1-6, 19-23, Phil. 4.1-9, Matt.22.1-14

October 18 Pentecost 20

Eucharist. Psalm 99, 1 Th 1.1-10. Matt 22. 15-22

October 25 Pentecost 21

Eucharist. Psalm 90. 1-6,13-17, 1 Th. 2.1-8, Matt 22.34-46

Nov 1 All Saints

Eucharist. Psalm 34. 1-10, 1 Jn 3. 1-3, Matt 5.1-12

November 8 Pentecost 23

Eucharist. Psalm 78.1-7, 1 Th. 4.13-18, Matt. 25.1-13

November 15 Pentecost 24

Eucharist. Psalm 123, 1 Th. 5.1-11, Matt. 25. 14-30

November 22 Last Sunday after Pentecost

Eucharist. Psalm 100, Eph. 1. 15-23, Matt 25. 31-46

November 29 1st Sunday of Advent

Eucharist. 1 Cor. 1. 3-9, Mark 13. 24-37

The Great Storm

Tuesday 11th August was overcast and humid. There was very little wind. About seven o'clock in the evening thunder started to rumble round and grew in intensity as the night wore on. There were spectacular flashes of lightning. After a fitful start the rain began to fall. A month's rain fell in four hours. Such a storm had not occurred in living memory and the area round our village, Forgandenny, suffered the full force. There was damage to transport in Eastern Scotland. A train was derailed by a landslip in Aberdeenshire and sadly two people lost their lives. The main line between Edinburgh and Glasgow was disrupted.

During the night we cowered beneath the bedclothes and, for a time, Mary and our daughter sat up with the dogs who were somewhat spooked by the tumult. In the morning we were relieved to discover that our house had not suffered any watery invasions. However, as the news spread around the village, we learnt that some of our neighbours had had water coming into their houses from the fields and in one place a retaining wall had collapsed and some of the burn which runs through the village overflowed into the house. The occupants may have to move out for six months while their houses are dried out and floors repaired.

Within a couple of miles of the village there were two landslips, one of which closed a road, and at least two culverts collapsed. One of them was in Station Road, Forgandenny, just below our house. The bank supporting the road was washed away when the swollen burn overwhelmed the culvert. A thin layer of tarmac hung over empty space. The Council were alerted and *Road Closed* signs and barriers were erected. Engineers were called out to inspect the damage. For once, the situation was treated as a matter of urgency, since the road is the only access in the immediate area for Network Rail, and a filtration plant belonging to Scottish Water. Six houses were cut off and their only access to the village and the main road

was through either Strathallan School or a private estate. Both routes were narrow, available for cars and vans but not for combined harvesters and other large agricultural machinery. There are several fields below us and the harvest of wheat and barley is ready to be gathered. Potatoes will follow shortly after. Huge tractors and trailers use the road regularly. At the moment they have to go on a two-mile detour to get to the barns. A curious feature of the storm was that the corn was not flattened; I assume that this was because there was no wind and the rain fell vertically.

Every day, we went down to inspect the work in progress and an engineer told Mary recently that it would be completed soon, just over a month after the storm. And it was! The storm has been a common topic of conversation when you meet people, asking if their houses were OK and sympathising with those whose houses were not.

Are such extremes of weather signs of climate change, I wonder, or have they always occurred somewhere or other? When they do occur at one's home, one is tempted to cry out: 'Why us?' If they are 'Acts of God', in the phrase insurance companies use, they are distinctly unwelcome.

David
Willington





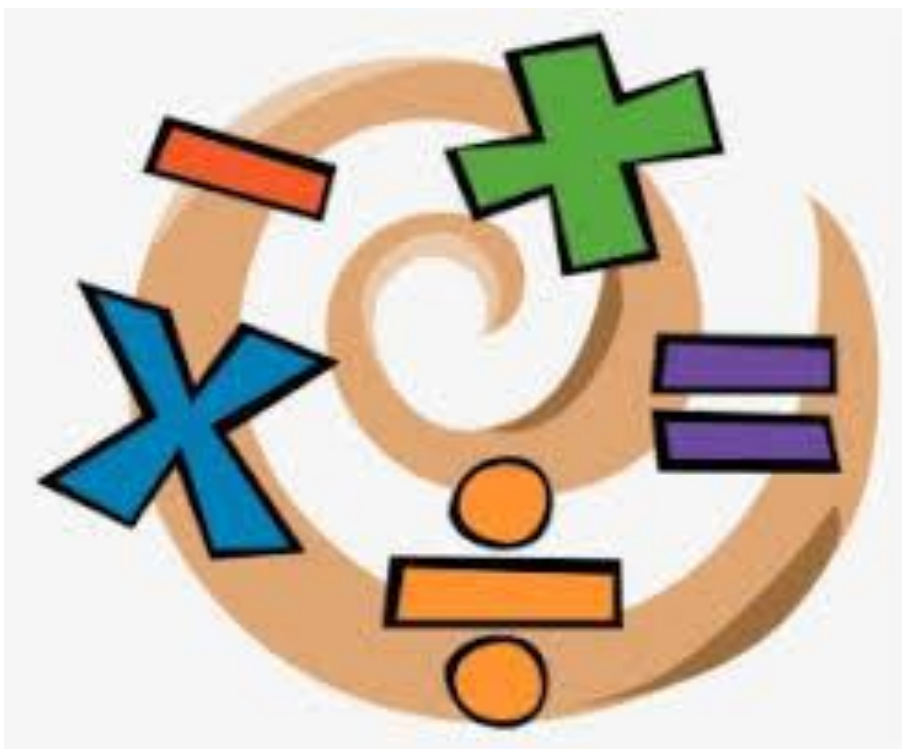
Four Fours

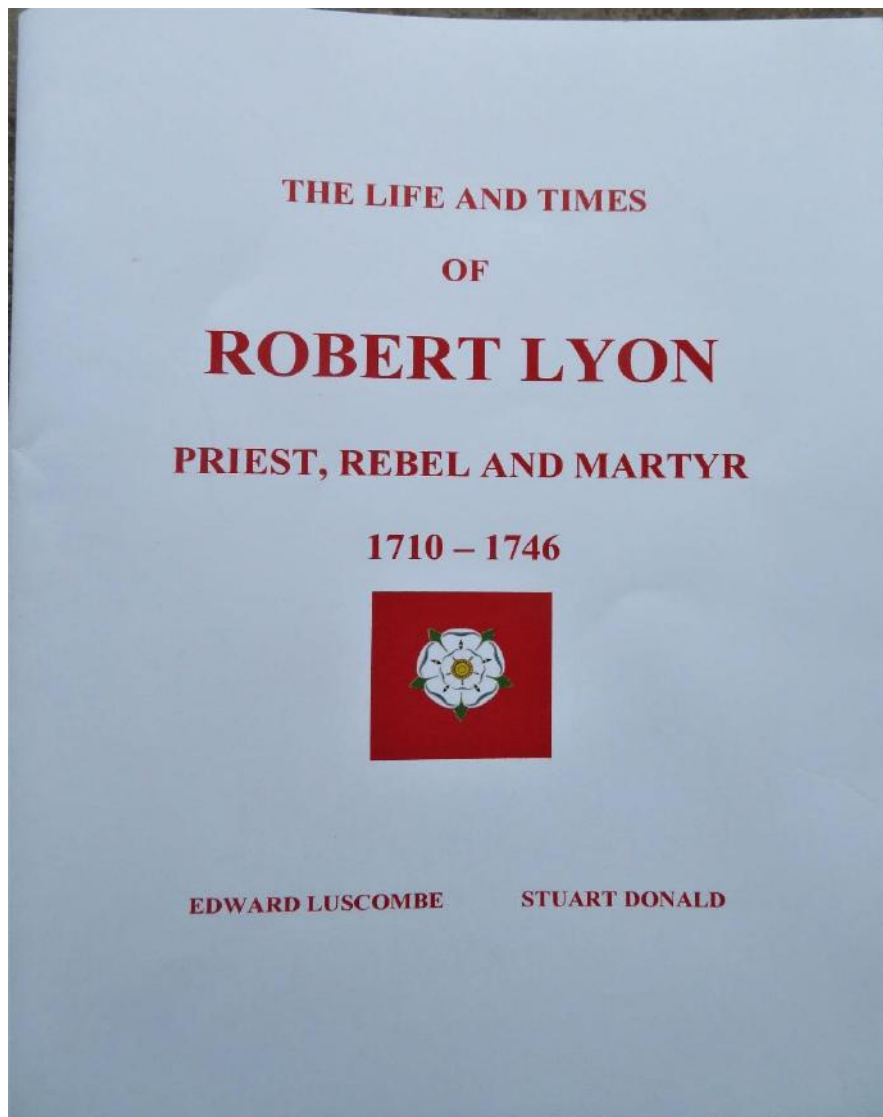
A Maths puzzle for those of you who like a little challenge.

Using four fours each time (and yes you must use all four fours) can you make each of the values from 0 to 9 by adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing ('Countdown' style).

Eg. $4 \times 4 \div 4 + 4 = 8$

4 4 4 4





Robert Lyon, minister of the Episcopal Chapel, is remembered on our list of incumbents. This booklet can be bought for £5 from the Office or the Rector.

From the Registers – Eternal Rest

Sigrídur Guðjónsdóttir: 15th September 1943 – 8th August 2020

John Fox: 30th June 1931 – 22nd August 2020

Sing Unto the Lord a New Song

Recently, there has been a controversy in *The Times* over the role of Cathedral Choirs. In these straitened times, they are an expensive item on the budget when there are so many other calls upon it, not least the maintenance of centuries-old fabric. Because of Covid-19 all choral activity has stopped. Surely it would not be amiss to take this opportunity to reappraise the role of choirs and not shy away from bold decisions? Furthermore, the notion of a cathedral choir and services such as Choral Evensong are seen in some quarters as elitist and not in the spirit of modern inclusiveness; elaborate musical settings are a distraction from the essence of Christian worship, which is the Eucharist.

There are various answers that can be made to these propositions. Firstly, choirs provide a musical education for boys, and girls now, which is not available elsewhere, given the decline of music teaching in schools; quite apart from the technicalities, choirs teach concentration, teamwork and practice. Not every chorister will go on to be a professional musician but these disciplines are applicable to all walks of life; Sir Alastair Cook, England's Cricket captain, was a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral and the training he received there has helped him at the crease.

Choirs are indeed inclusive; you will find children of all races and backgrounds. Not many cathedrals can afford a separate Choir School, teaching a regular curriculum as well as music. But several, for example Southwark, draw their choristers from the local community; children's talent and potential are the important things. The same applies to lay clerks; not all that many are professional and those who are have had their livelihoods taken away by the virus.

From the earliest days of the Church, hymn-singing has been an integral part of worship. Down the centuries composers have lent their inspiration to liturgical themes. In the same way, artists have decorated churches, whether the iconostasis in an Orthodox church or Michaelangelo's *The Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel. Music enhances the Word of God, directly in the case of the *St Matthew Passion* of Bach, for example, or Handel's *Messiah*; both works quote directly from scripture. And there are many other works that illustrate Man's relationship with God, for example settings of the Mass, whether by Palestrina or Judith Bingham.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, English Church music was blessed with Byrd, Tallis and later Purcell. Nothing of much worth was produced in the eighteenth until SS Wesley revived Church music in the nineteenth century. Stanford and Parry wrote fine liturgical works and there is now a plethora of anthems to choose from, illustrating every aspect of the Christian message. Anglican services such as Choral Evensong have spread around the world (I have heard it in Christchurch, New Zealand) and there is no parallel in other denominations.

Public worship has drawn on the talents of architects, painters and composers as well as preachers. It has, therefore, an aesthetic as well as a spiritual element. Good singing is an integral part of this, not least the contribution of Cathedral choirs. We have too precious a legacy to let it slip.

David Willington



Contact Information

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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 David Willington for our December and January issue by

SUNDAY 15TH NOVEMBER

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In partnership with
the Scottish Association of
Retired Anglican Clergy

