



St John the Baptist Scottish Episcopal Church Perth

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April and May 2021

Letter from the Curate

By the time you receive this letter, the following bits of good news may well be old hat! Irrespective, I'll begin with those. Firstly, Canon Graham is well on the way to recovery - hurray and thanks be to God - and secondly, the fervent hope at present is that St John's will reopen on Easter Day for a 1030 Eucharistic service.

Now the caveat! As I write this letter on March 18th, the re-opening of the church is still dependent on there being no negative changes in the updates from the Scottish Government and from the House of Bishops due later in March. And so, by the time you receive the magazine, plans may or may not have had to be altered.....

Meantime, here we are a year on from the first lockdown and still living restricted lives, but that does not mean doing the small things is not to be celebrated. At the beginning of March, the Welsh commemorated their patron saint - St David. His famous last words to his monks were, 'Be joyful, keep the Faith and do the little things you have heard and seen me do'. These words turned my mind towards relishing afresh the small things - such as all the delightful signs of spring unfolding around us.

Spring is the season long seized on by *poets* to symbolize rebirth and awakening. After a long winter of lockdown, I am filled afresh with wonder as the earth turns green again. The bright purple crocuses have pushed up from the ground, and yellow daffodils still dance in the breeze. Birds sing louder, sunshine has melted the frozen world and life is renewed. Gerard Manley Hopkins captures the delight and hope that accompany Spring. 'Nothing is so beautiful as Spring – When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;.....the racing lambs too have fair their fling'.

There is too a sense of growing hope across the nation. The combination of the rollout of the vaccine programme and the effectiveness of lockdown means the infection rates of COVID -19 are declining in the UK. Although a rejuvenating season, springtime hope can be

tantalisingly transient. That led me to reflect on where we base our perennial hope? The bible is clear. ‘But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love... Psalm 33:18

Keeping our eyes fixed on God helps keep us rooted in that hope. If, however, the roots of our hope are feeling stretched, perhaps our question should be, ‘Am I really keeping my eyes fully on the Lord?’ There are many ways to do this - for example keeping a habit of prayerfulness throughout each day. Whilst we commit to God the big issues of vaccination roll out, climate change, the future of our church and faith and so on, as St David wisely mentioned, the little things are also hugely important to God and to others - like making that quick, kindly phone call or sending a loving greetings card. Mother Teresa captures the importance of this kind of work. “We can do no great things, only small things with great love.”

There is reassurance too in absorbing the searing honesty and beautiful poetry of the Psalms. As well as being lyrically lovely, the psalms are also rugged and sober. They draw us deeper into the knowledge of ourselves and can most perfectly suit our needs in any given situation whether it be one of joy or sorrow, prosperity or failure, trial or indeed hope. ‘Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him’. Psalm 62:5,6.

On the other hand, whilst many are grateful for the blessings of a warm home, food and communications via technology, fear does not necessarily evaporate. John Keats courageously expressed his great fear – that of never living long enough to finish his writing. ‘When I have fears that I may cease to be, Before my pen has glean’d my teeming brain.’

It is a melancholic note the expression of which, if we’re honest, may not be unfamiliar. Perhaps we’ve been haunted by thoughts of never again visiting a favourite place, or worse, seeing loved ones. But we must remember Keats’ lines are full of promise too. Keats achieved the very things he feared to fail in. In the end, he became a bright eternal star, gazing down on ‘The moving waters at their priestlike task, Of pure oblation round earth’s human shore’.

We don't have to be ordained or out and about to share in a 'priestlike task'. We all can, as St David put it, 'do the little things' and in this we fulfil our calling to be as Christ to others.

And so, as we travel towards Easter, there will be in many of us a mix of poignancy and promise. We can hold on honestly to whatever we're experiencing – pain, doubt, insight, joy, regret, delight. We find hope in knowing that through the death of Jesus, we have God's affirmation of solidarity to be present with us in suffering. The cross is God's promise to continue to be faithful.

May we all be encouraged to dig deeper into the meaning of Jesus' crucifixion. May we find renewed joy in our ultimate hope that God will one day fully fill the land with his promises of Easter morning. May we also rejoice on the day we can again gather to sing:

'All my hope on God is founded; he doth still my trust renew, me through change and chance he guideth, only good and only true. God unknown, he alone calls my heart to be his own'.

With loving prayers as aye for you and yours,
Revd Annie MacKay Hughes, (Assistant Curate)



Easter Services

Sunday 28th March 1030: Passion / Palm Sunday. A pre-recorded service with the dramatic reading from Marks's Gospel of Christ's Passion

Thursday 1st April 1030: A pre-recorded Maundy Thursday service.

Friday 2nd April 12 noon: A pre-recorded Good Friday service following the Stations of the Cross.

Easter Day 4th April 1030: Eucharist.

Church Re-Opening Update

Based on the latest rules from the House of Bishops and the Scottish government, the Vestry has finally been able to meet and has agreed that, barring advice to the contrary from the above two sources, St John's will open on 4th April Easter Day at 1030 for a Eucharistic service. As Covid regulations will still apply, mask wearing, sanitizing, social distancing and immediate departure after the service will have to continue.

The capacity in St John's is capped at 35. Should you wish to attend on Easter Day, please contact Judy Norwell at latest by Tuesday 30th March. mailme@kinnoullhill.co.uk 01738 626789. Should the Easter Day service be oversubscribed, there will be a ballot. This system is for Easter Sunday only.

If you are NOT contacted after the closing date of Tuesday, 30th March you should attend the service on Easter Day. For those who, alas, will have to be contacted about stepping aside this time because of the ballot, they may watch it being live streamed.

Thereafter, the system will revert to the previous arrangement ie first come, first served. A rota will be also arranged, however, to ensure everyone has fair access to future church services.

Arrangements for services post Easter will be circulated as soon as they have been finalised by Canon Graham.

Thanks

I want to say a huge thank you to all my friends at St. John's for the cards and good wishes for my 90th birthday. It was lovely when I opened the door and found Jean Hendry socially distanced on the path with a lovely bouquet of flowers from the Fellowship.

Thank you to everyone.

I keep saying to you children that achieving such an age is nothing to do with me but down to genes. Be warned - my Grandmother was nearly 100 when she died!

We must just look forward to the time we will all be back at church and able to meet face to face.

Sonia Dowse

Eternal Rest

William (Bill) Bell: 19th May 1932 - 24th December 2020

Christian Aid

As I write it is March 10, 2021. I read that today Christian Aid has published a book **Rage & Hope: 75 Prayers for a Better World**, celebrating 25 years of Christian Aid's work - real people like you and me making real change! This publication is a prayer book full of defiance and determination, inviting us to join Christian Aid and followers of Jesus around the world in a united chorus of rage and hope.

And then, serendipity! As most of you know, the SEC General Synod December 2020 committed us to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This year, the focus of Christian Aid's work is what we may perceive as the greatest challenge to us all – the climate crisis.

Christian Aid have helped people triumph in the face of many seemingly impossibilities. Ending apartheid seemed a distant dream; Fairtrade looked impossible, but Christian Aid supporters chose to challenge these and many other issues. Now changing weather patterns are heading us towards climate chaos, one of the greatest injustices we face. It is imperative that we, in the early 21st century, try to stop this crisis.

Planning for CAW 2021

When I told Annie that the local ecumenical Christian Aid group was not currently operating, she suggested that I contact Pat Butler and Wendy Duncan, the CA reps from St Ninian's Cathedral, to explore whether we might work together. They would be very pleased to work with us for Christian Aid. We hope, as we usually do, to invite someone come to speak about Christian Aid, – possibly to share their story of being a keen Christian Aid supporter.

We have explored the CA website, where the challenge of a sponsored 300,000 steps during the month of May is suggested. For one person, this equates to 10,000 steps daily. But we are thinking that several people might share this, so we are exploring that. Time, rather than distance, could be daunting.

We would set up a Justgiving page, such as I used two years ago quite successfully. And there would also be the traditional paper forms for those who preferred to donate by cash or cheque.

Depending on the lifting of restrictions, other events may become possible around Christian Aid Week. We will keep you posted!

Meantime, are we willing to stand with people like those in Kenya? See next article.

Elaine Cameron

What our donations could do

Rose's story

Rose is caught in a cycle of climate chaos. From severe drought to flooding, extreme weather robs her of what she needs to survive: a reliable source of water. Rose remembers how often the rains would fall, giving fruit to the baobab trees and providing plenty of nutritious food to eat. *When I was a young girl, there was plenty of food*, Rose says. Now, the rains are totally unreliable.

The climate crisis has put Rose's community constantly on edge, living with drought.

I worry a lot about food. I pray to God that the rainfall will become normal like it used to be.

Rose strives to provide for her grandchildren who live with her, and give them happy childhoods, like the times she remembers.

All too often, Rose sets out walking on an empty stomach to collect water for her family. The journey is long and dangerous.

Because I am old, I can't walk very fast. When I get home I just rest in the evening. I have no energy to do anything else Rose says.

The nearby earth dam should be a lifeline, but it's not deep enough, and runs out of water very quickly. Imagine how dispiriting this is for Rose! Rose is over 60 years old and simply won't have the strength to fetch water from further afield for much longer. **We need to fight this climate crisis together.**

I believe God gives me strength and helps me persevere. I pray that God will help people to help me she says.

With a reliable source of water, people like Rose would be free from long, painful journeys. They would be able to grow fresh vegetables to eat. And they would be able to protect themselves from the dangers of coronavirus. With such dire need, every last drop of water that falls in Rose's community is precious.

Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live.



A Thought for Epiphany

As I write this, we are still in the season of Epiphany, but with Ash Wednesday and Lent on the horizon. It is not often that I write in serious vein but I have, for the first time, experienced what could be described as an epiphanic moment. (Even for the etymologists amongst you the adjective “epiphanic” is not in common usage.)

Since mid-March last year I have been going into St John’s to deal with any offerings or collections, on at least a weekly basis, in order to record and bank them in the safe environment of the Bank of Scotland night safe. As the months have passed, I have felt increasingly sad about our building. All pews, cushions, hassocks and altar linen, except on the main altar, have been removed. The building is cold and soulless, not the place which used to have life and happiness about it. Recently, however, I realised that St John’s is not a building, but a community of people who care, a fellowship. Over these last twelve months, I have been kept cheerful by the many members who have telephoned me or whom I have contacted by phone or socially on distanced visits delivering *Quest*, or just visiting.

So it has taken seventy-seven and a half years and a pandemic for me to realise and accept that not the building, pews, stained glass windows *et al.* but we, the people of St John’s, are the church. We can still have a reflective Lent and look forward to Easter as a family of people, even without our building or services.

Alastair H. Cruickshank

Some More Reflections on Lent

The season of Lent is first mentioned in the Canons of the Council of Nicaea (AD 325), but probably had been observed long before that. Traditionally it was a time for catechumens to spend in rigorous preparation before their reception into the Church by Baptism during the celebration of Easter. People were expected to purify themselves by abstinence, vigil and penitence and, like Christ, resist the attacks of Satan. The season is celebrated by a bare church and penitential hymns and psalms (especially Psalm 51, set by Allegri in the *Miserere*, sung at Evensong on Ash Wednesday).

In previous centuries Lent was also the time when the merrymaking of Christmas and the New Year was replaced by a period of hardship, when the supplies of food, stored in barns, began to run short before fresh supplies could be harvested or obtained. Therefore, for many, abstinence was not necessarily a sign of spiritual preparation but a necessity. It is interesting to note that Mohammed, in the seventh century AD, adopted this period of abstinence, Ramadan.

Mortification of the Flesh (the Lenten Sacrifice) for most people means giving up something one enjoys, whether chocolate or a G and T before supper. There are very good reasons not connected with Lent for giving up chocolate or alcohol. Nevertheless, whether the abstinence is a small or large affair, it is, if not actually a sacrament, 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace'. By enduring some hardship, however small, we aspire to share with Christ his triumph over the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

Mark, whoever he was, probably composed his Gospel in the early 70s AD and was therefore the earliest of the evangelists. It is not a biography but a series of stories, embellished significantly in the other gospels (for example the birth and temptation narratives), of Christ's sayings and actions handed down by oral tradition among the early Christians. These stories reflect the belief that in the life of Jesus the Jewish hope of the

coming of the Messiah was fulfilled. To establish this, Jesus must be linked to the Old Testament: John the Baptist is foreseen in *Isaiah* 40.3 ('the voice of one who crieth in the Wilderness') and therefore must 'appear in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance'. The period of forty days of Christ's temptation is an echo of the Israelites' years in the Wilderness. The narrative of the Temptation*1 is clearly not a factual account*2 but rather an allegory, symbolically describing Jesus' victory over Satan and thereby further establishing his credentials as the Messiah, the Christ or 'anointed one', at the very start of his ministry. Traditionally, the Wilderness was the abode of evil spirits, of which Satan was the chief. Satan was opposed to the will of God and the establishment of his kingdom.

*1Temptation' is more than resisting the desire for a chocolate biscuit. The Greek word is *pierazo* and the Latin *tempto*. Both of them mean 'try' or 'put to the test' as in 'Gold is tried in the fire and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity' (*Ecclesiasticus* 2. 5).

*2 The ministry of the angels is an echo of I *Kings* 19 vv.4-8. Elijah then spent forty days on Mount Horeb. In Jewish tradition, the wild beasts are subject to the righteous man and will do him no harm, and, when the Messiah comes, all animals will live in harmony (*Isaiah* 11 v.6ff); God will bring back the paradise lost by Adam (cf *Psalms* 91 vv.11-13).

David Willington



Photograph supplied by Mary Willington

An Interesting Guest

Since I am now on my own and with the family far away, I have relied on the kindness of friends, former colleagues and EFL students, and church members, especially Joyce, who has very kindly taken me to my Ninewells appointments. As soon as Covid became serious, I received many phone calls and e-mails from European friends to check that I was well.

One of the first was from Lucia in Romania. In 1992 at the Fellowship, we had a talk by a retired Edinburgh doctor who had just returned from Romania as a member of a charity formed to bring over surgeons to train in more modern practices. This was just after the fall of Ceausescu, and we listened with horror as the doctor described the dreadful conditions he witnessed. He ended his talk by asking for accommodation for those coming for training, and so we had Lucia for two weeks before she moved to another family for a further two weeks.

Lucia was an absolute delight to have. She was a very happy and energetic person, who didn't seem to resent that here we all had so many things she didn't. Her wardrobe was very limited, so I contacted the charity to access some funds to buy shoes suitable for wear in the hospitals, as she only had boots. On a visit to a supermarket, she looked around in amazement at all the things she had never seen before. At home her husband, also a surgeon, had to go at 6 a.m. to shop for milk and bread. They kept a hen for fresh eggs, and when they went on holiday to their cottage in the country, they took the hen with them! When I told her about my mother curing eggs in waterglass when my Grandpa's hens weren't laying, Lucia wondered if she could do that. A visit to the Scone pharmacy tracked down two tins to take home.

Lucia was a maxillofacial surgeon and was welcomed and befriended by her fellow surgeons in Perth and Ninewells, where she learned all sorts of new skills. She couldn't believe that needles were already threaded with such fine thread, as she was still sewing with horsehair. Many of you

will remember a very well-respected member of St. John's, a retired plastic surgeon. He very kindly invited Lucia to visit and gave her some of his own books. He went to Bridge of Earn hospital and found some instruments, no longer required, to pass on. He also talked through an operation on which she was to be examined on her return, which she passed with flying colours.

We have kept in touch over the years. Both she and her husband have now retired but keep well. Lucia was a very interesting guest to have.

Margaret Terris



Loch Polney, Dunkeld (Mary Willington)

Sunday Lectionary

April 4th Easter Day

Acts 10. 34-43, John 20. 1-18

April 11th Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 4. 32-35, John 20. 19-31

April 18th Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 3. 12-19, Luke 24. 36b-48

April 25th Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 4. 5-12, John 10. 11-18

May 2nd Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 8. 26-40, John 15. 1-8

May 9th Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 10. 44-48, John 15. 9-17

May 16th Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 1. 15-17,21-26, John 17. 6-19

May 23rd Pentecost

Acts 2. 1-21, John 15. 26-27, 16. 4b-15

May 30th Trinity Sunday

Isaiah 6. 1-8, John 3. 1-17

Online Conference



Responding to the Sacred Gender and Liturgy in Conversation

12-17 April 2021

genandlit@gmail.com

A free online conference with a new panel discussion released each day on Facebook and Youtube, 12-16 April, culminating in a plenary session and act of worship on Saturday 17 April.

Taking in a wide range of perspectives our speakers will discuss issues in the field of gender and liturgy, in the context of liturgical reform beginning within the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Our speakers include:

Merete Thommassen (University of Oslo), Bill Paterson (MindfulnessFife), Bishop Ian Paton (SEC), Leon van Ommen (SEC, University of Aberdeen), Bridget Nichols (Church of Ireland Theological Institute, Dublin), David Jasper (SEC, University of Glasgow), Lisa Isherwood (University of Winchester), Beverly Clack (Oxford Brookes University).

Former Choir Member

I was in touch recently with James Jones, the former Bishop of Liverpool, to confirm a story I had heard many years ago that he had spent some of his childhood years in Perth and Scone. The story is correct and he mentioned he used to sing in the St John's Episcopal choir as a youngster. I had been hoping his church connection might have been with St Ninian's but alas no!

He also mentioned the occasion he had been chatting in the House of Lords to Baroness Young of Old Scone and it turned out they had been in the same class together at Robert Douglas Memorial School - my old school, too, in fact, but they're a bit older than me! There can't be many classes in state primaries to have two former pupils sitting in the Lords.

Jeremy Duncan

Editor, Cathedral News

Pauline Leeming

Although she would not be well-known to many in the Congregation, it was sad to note the death of Pauline on 28th January at Ruthven Towers Care Home in Auchterarder. Pauline and her brother in Australia, Kenneth, were the children of our late long-serving member of St John's, Helen Leeming, who died some years ago.

Pauline did not have the easiest of lives, but she was always welcomed in St John's, when she normally would attend the Thursday Service in the Lady Chapel. It was easy to talk to her and she had a friendly personality. Latterly she was in the safe care of Ruthven Towers. We extend our sympathy to Kenneth.

Alastair H. Cruickshank

Hallowing Places

A distinctive feature of Coventry Cathedral throughout the centuries was its series of Guild Chapels situated around the walls, the chapels of the Smiths; Girdlers; Drapers; Mercers; Cappers; Dyers. They belonged to the industrial guilds of medieval times. As a modern development of these guild chapels “Hallowing Places” have been set round the walls of the ruins.

The guild chapels stood in ancient times for the closer connection between Church and Industry. These Hallowing Places stand today for the same principle that the whole of our daily life in all its parts belongs to God. The Prayers of the Hallowing Places are to be carried back into daily life and frequently used.

IN INDUSTRY

God be in my hands and in my making.

IN THE ARTS

God be in my senses and in my creating.

IN THE HOME

God be in my heart and in my loving.

IN COMMERCE

God be at my desk and in my trading.

IN HEALING

God be in my skill and in my touching.

IN GOVERNMENT

God be in my plans and in my deciding.

IN EDUCATION

God be in my mind and in my growing.

IN RECREATION

God be in my limbs and in my leisure.

Graham Kingsley-Rowe

A Polish Adventure

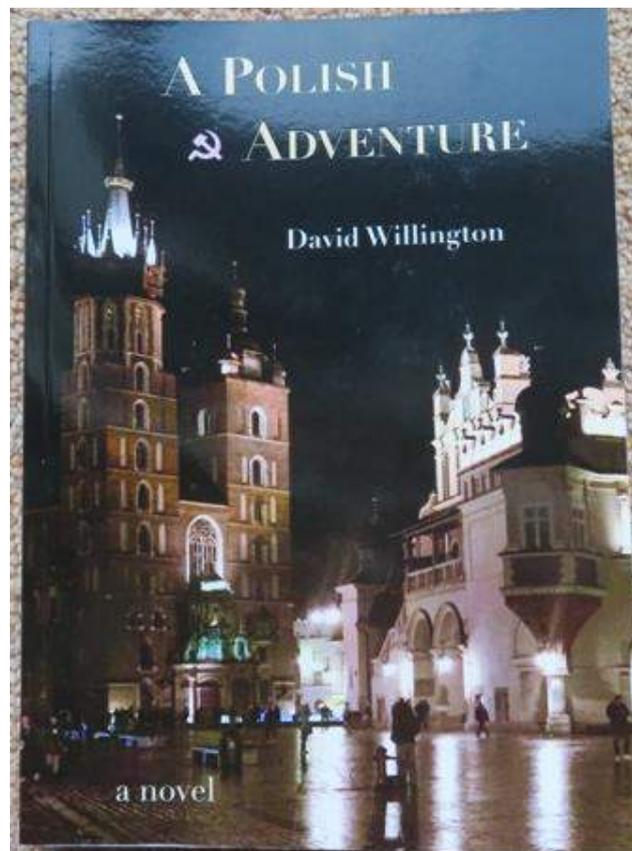
My new novel is set in the Cold War. The blurb reads:

‘Soon after taking a job at a London publishing house, young Helen Braithwaite is posted to Poland as a cover for clandestine activities behind the Iron Curtain. Befriending a Polish couple opposed to the Communist regime, she becomes dangerously involved in a plan to help them escape to the West. At a time of seething unrest in Eastern Europe, Helen finds herself in great danger and all her inner resources are tested to the full.’

Essential lockdown reading and unputdownable, I would say.

This book would be on sale in the church at a price of £10, the proceeds going to church funds as with my previous books. However, as the church is not open, I am happy to deliver copies to your doorstep. Please contact me by email dwillington@hotmail.com or by telephone 01738 813787.

David Willington



The Long View

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts.
It is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
Of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we can do is complete, which is another way of saying
That the Kingdom lies beyond us.

No statement says all that can be said.
No Prayer fully expresses our Faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No programme accomplishes the Church's Mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about:
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds that are already planted, knowing that they hold future
promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,
And there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something and do it very well.
It may be incomplete
But it is a beginning, a step along the way,
An opportunity for God's Grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,
But that is the difference between the Master Builder and the Worker.
We are Workers not Master Builders,

Ministers not Messiahs.
We are Prophets of a future not our own.

Archbishop Oscar Romero
Martyred on March 24th 1980
San Salvador, El Salvador



The above photograph supplied by Joyce Sampson

Diocesan Synod 2021

Diocesan Synod via Zoom was a novel experience. The whole Diocese was gathered together but because I was on an iPad I could only see nine people, when the connection held.

Synod began with a Eucharist Service. Bishop Ian spoke on the Prodigal Son and encouraged us to explore things that are often missed in this familiar story. A theme which seemed to resonate throughout the day.

Bishop's Charge – Bishop Ian encouraged us to be aware of issues and changes which face our church, the country and the world to continue to look outwards to be simpler, generous, humble and loving in our lives.

Finance - The financial review was accepted, quota remaining unchanged at 16%.

The Synod Working Party had decided beforehand to use nominated facilitators in the breakout rooms to streamline feedback, an idea I hope will be retained.

Pilgrimage – 2021 was the Provincial Year of Pilgrimage but due to Covid restrictions much was cancelled and has been extended to 'Season of Pilgrimage'. It is hoped that there will be two Pilgrimages within the Diocese in September and two in 2022 to the Holy Land and Kent completing the Pilgrimage of William of Perth. Further details will follow when Lockdown rules allow.

Canon 4 (election of Bishops) – Consultation on changes to this Canon have commenced and will be ongoing for some time, firstly to General Synod then Diocesan Synod then the wider church membership.

After lunch a very enjoyable presentation by the Young Peoples' Committee/Church in Dunfermline was given showing their experiences of an open accepting church. They and the Rev. Canon Christine Fraser

encouraged us to continue to think how we might engage with young people in the community as well as in church.

Climate change – The Rev. Elaine Garman spoke on how best to address the 2030 commitments as individual charges and the whole church. We then went to our breakout groups where we were asked to discuss 1: what actions our churches were taking to become carbon neutral? 2: what would you like help with? and 3: have you already got/seen successful examples of churches reducing their carbon footprint which could be shared. It is hoped that these discussions could form a plan of action to inspire and encourage us. The Rev. John Murdoch (Church of Scotland) was keen to establish links with the Diocese so that this was as ecumenical, forward looking and community based as possible.

Bishop Ian closed Synod with prayers and a blessing.

Christine Bracewell

Effie Gray, Lady Millais



In the Kinnoull Burial Ground, overlooking the Tay above Perth, rest the remains of Effie Millais.

Behind these stark words lies a fascinating story.

Effie (born Euphemia) was born to May 1828 and grew up at Bowerswell below Kinnoull Hill. Her father was a Writer to the Signet and she had a normal, happy childhood with two younger sisters.

At some stage in her early childhood she would have met John Ruskin, who was a family friend, and the two families, Gray and Ruskin, were keen for a match between John and Effie. However, there was a nine year difference between the two, hence the marriage did not take place until April 1848, when Effie was 19 years old, and after what had been described as a ‘unsteady courtship’.

Ruskin was a polymath - the leading art critic of the Victorian era, draughtsman, poet and philosopher. He wrote on subjects as diverse as architecture and ornithology. He was also a champion of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. By all accounts, he had a strict and emotionally repressive childhood, with few friends his own age, which might account for what followed. The marriage with Effie never appeared to be a happy one, was never consummated (owing to “incurable impotency”) and was annulled in 1854.

By this time, through Ruskin’s friendship with the Pre-Raphaelites, Effie had already met John Everett Millais and indeed had modelled for one of his paintings ‘The Order of the Release’. In 1853 Millais travelled to Scotland to paint a portrait of Ruskin at Glenfinlas, and during this period he also made sketches and drawings of Effie. As a result they spent much time together, and she started opening up about the sad truth of her marriage, obviously shocking to Millais, and gradually they fell in love.

An annulment from her marriage followed, causing a public scandal, as in the mid-19th century divorce was considered shocking.

However, in 1855 Effie and Millais were married and went on to have eight children. She had a major influence on Millais’ career and many of his paintings were inspired by his family, using his wife, children and grandchildren as models. (Indeed, one of his grandsons was the model for Bubbles, which was subsequently became the Pears soap advertisement.)

She was a talented painter in her own right, and early in their marriage he enjoyed giving her drawing lessons. They decided initially to live in Scotland near to her parents, rather than London, which brought back sad memories for Effie and her horrid experiences with Ruskin, but they did move down to London at a later date.

Effie was very practical, both caring and compassionate when Millais was having problems with his art. She also helped him with research in finding historical costumes if needed for his paintings.

Interestingly, Ruskin still managed to be objective when analysing Millais' art.

His output was prolific, much of which was due to Effie's sympathy and understanding.

Millais was made a baronet by Queen Victoria in 1885, and died in 1896, followed sixteen months later by Effie in 1897.

Her father, George Gray, had donated the West window, based on designs by Millais, to Kinnoull church in 1870.

Patricia Noel-Paton



Photographs above supplied by Joyce Sampson

Some Notes on the Crucifixion

Every year we read, or enact, the Passion Narrative. The text is so familiar that we do not always notice some strange features. I have been puzzled by Mark xv 33 and 38, in the earliest account of the Crucifixion:

33 *And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.* In Luke (xxiii 45) it is interpreted as an eclipse, lasting from noon until mid afternoon. But even a total eclipse of the sun does not last more than eight minutes. We must assume, therefore, that Mark has mentioned it because he thought that the great significance of the Crucifixion should be marked by a portent. So often in the gospel narratives we find in Christ the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy and teaching. For example, compare Isaiah xiii 9ff: *Behold the day of the Lord cometh...For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth...*

Amos viii 9: *And it will come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.* It was a common view in antiquity that portents presage momentous events, for example the list of portents marking the death of Julius Caesar which the Roman poet Vergil (Georgics 1.463ff) described, writing seventy years before the Crucifixion. Compare Shakespeare Julius Caesar ii 1: *When beggars die there are no comets seen; the heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.*

38 *And the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.* The Temple, rebuilt by King Herod fifty years before the Crucifixion, was, and is, the centre of Jewish worship. Orthodox Jews still post prayers in the crevices of the Western Wall. It is assumed that the veil in question is that mentioned in Exodus (xxvi 31ff) and Leviticus (xxi 23), the veil covering the entrance to the Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, containing the Ark of the Covenant, on the eve of Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. Paul, writing before Mark, describes Christ as the new High Priest (Hebrews ix 11f): *Neither by the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* Thus the

rending of the veil is an allegory of the transition from Rabbinical Judaism, where a barrier is put between God and Man, to Christianity where all have access to the mercy of God through the intercession of Christ, our new High Priest.

The *Via Dolorosa*, or El Wad Street, is a bustling narrow street in the Arab quarter of Jerusalem through a *souk*. It climbs quite steeply out of the Old City and takes a left and then a right turn to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. At Station 5 I had my hand photographed at the point in the wall where Christ is alleged to have stumbled when carrying the cross, and steadied himself against the wall. If it is really the place, then Christ must have been six feet tall. Simon of Cyrene was conscripted to carry the cross, or rather the crossbeam; the upright would have already been in position on Golgotha.

David Willington

Book Recommendation

The Salt Path, by Raynor Winn – shortlisted for Costa book awards

How many of you keen walkers might consider a 630 mile trek? This memoir describes such a walk, which Raynor Winn and her husband Moth, undertake, in the unlikeliest circumstances. Not only have they lost their beloved farmhouse home in a court case; Moth has been diagnosed with a rare degenerative brain disease.

They have been active on the farm for thirty years, but now, in their early fifties, they have no home; no job, no money. Desperate for a sense of purpose, they impulsively decide to walk the South West Coastal path. With a flimsy tent and thin sleeping bags, they set off wild camping.

The first weeks are physically much harder, slower and more painful than they expect – coastal paths are hilly! They are stung by the response to their honesty, ‘*We’re homeless. We lost our home.*’ People wince and

look away. They learn later to say only that they have sold their home, and are going where the wind blows.

Gradually Raynor gains a sense of belonging and safety: a biblical experience with ladybirds; meeting swallows, kestrels and a peregrine falcon. She comes to feel part of nature itself.

She writes searingly of her ongoing inability to accept the reality of Moth's illness '*pretending he would never need a doctor.. in a tent in wisp-thin sleeping bags.*' Many times she wonders at their rashness; hunger is a constant concern – one week, they eat only noodles . The weather grows cold, gales howl; they are constantly sodden. And pain - Moth's regular medication runs out and he needs more. How long can Moth defy medical advice?

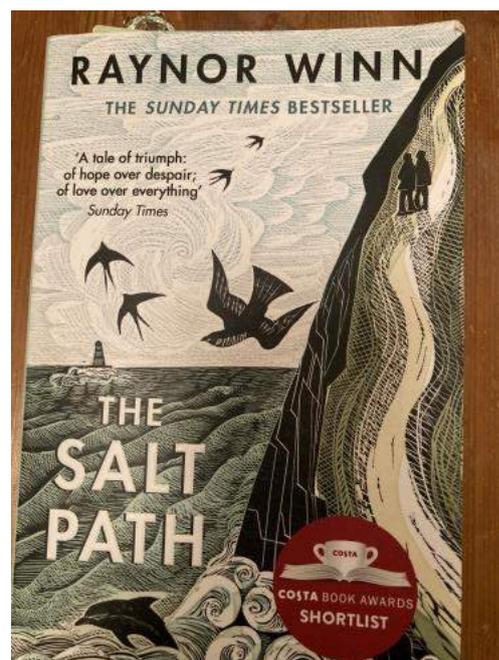
But unexpected encounters and uplifting humour infuses the book . Moth gives an impromptu reading from his battered copy of Seamus Heaney's *Beowulf*. Buskers drop coins into a cap – a small fortune!

They have not lost the love which holds them together. Homeless or not, they, despite everything, stay true to the values by which they have lived – their strength and compassion for, and belief in, each other. Home at the deepest level is in their relationship.

I remember hearing a sermon which began *Where is home for you?* One month later, Bruce and I returned to an American kitchen we hardly knew, to the congregation's message *Welcome home!* It meant more to us than they guessed – home is where we are in relationships which welcome us, cherish us, encourage us to grow and give of our best.

I hope you enjoy this uplifting and touching book as much as I did.

Elaine Cameron





Photographs above provided by Joyce Sampson

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 June/July issue by

Sunday 23rd May



The above photograph supplied by Joyce Sampson



from Mary Willington's garden

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