



St John the Baptist Scottish Episcopal Church Perth

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February and March 2022

Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends,

As we step out into the unknown with another New Year ahead of us, who knows what all lies ahead of time, the plans and work God has for us to do. Trust is the word, trusting in a God who journeys with us into the future, carrying all that has shaped us in the past, and preparing us for all the work that lies ahead. This applies to us as individuals and of course very much as the worshipping community of St. John's.

Living in such times as we do, with all the challenges that life and the world sets before us, all we can do is trust, as we walk together in the way of Christ.

I hope this New Year brings to all of us some sense of peace and love, after what has been such turbulent times. I often hear these days folks talking of not knowing what each new day brings. We certainly know the reality of that, as we have lived together through this pandemic and new ways of being.

One of the joys for me has been seeing the family of St. John's coming together on a Sunday and a Thursday once again. It has been so lovely to welcome you back into the faith community. If you have not ventured back to church yet, give it some thought. It is very safe, with measures of social distancing and sanitising put in place; in fact it is safer than going to the supermarket, I'm sure. I totally believe that we must be in community, as we keep the church doors open on Princes Street and the faith alive.

Let this New Year be a time of trust, as we ask God to bless the future of our Church and community.

Wonderful words by Howard Thurman:

When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

I look forward to seeing you in church and to sharing the journey with you into 2022.

Much love,

Graham.



Services

Weekly Services

Sunday	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
Thursday	11.00 a.m.	Communion

Special Services

2 nd March	7.30 pm	Ash Wednesday
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Christian Aid

Very many thanks to all of you who donated to the Christian Aid Christmas Appeal, raising over £110.

You may remember that on the second Sunday in Advent we sang the Christian Aid carol “When out of poverty is born”. In the last Quest, I described how in South Sudan, the young mother, Adut, was constantly worried about giving her children dirty water – or none at all. 2021 was a year of unprecedented rains and the worst flooding in six decades - homes, crops and livestock swept away.

You will be pleased to hear that Christian Aid has been awarded funding from the Scottish Government’s Humanitarian Emergency Fund to help some of the most vulnerable families. This money is being used to supply emergency cash grants, farming seeds, tools and fishing kits to families in desperate need. Even with this, over seven million people don’t have enough to eat.

And now, an invitation! Christian Aid Scotland invites you to join them virtually:

Tuesday 22nd February 10 am – 12 noon

You will hear about some of our amazing partner work at the virtual Gathering.

We're delighted to welcome staff from Christian Aid South Sudan. Yitna Tekaligne and Mbaraka Fazal will speak to us about the impact of climate change and conflict on vulnerable communities.

We're also excited to find out about new ways of celebrating Christian Aid Week. We'll share the huge success of last year's virtual Kiltwalk and let you know how you can get involved, as well as sharing what other supporters have done to keep their Christian Aid Week fresh and fun. There will be opportunities to ask questions of our staff.

Email to register and receive the joining instructions:

edinburgh@christian-aid.org

Please join me: phone or email if you have any questions: 07977 416250

elaine.ging@gmail.com

Elaine Cameron



Hillel and the Pagan

The great Pharasaic sage and rabbi, Hillel, was a contemporary of Jesus. He came from Babylonia to preach in Jerusalem. It was said that one day a pagan heard him and promised to convert if he could summarise the entire Torah while standing on one leg. Duly standing on one leg, Hillel replied:

‘What is hateful to yourself, do not do to your fellow man. That is the whole of the Torah and the remainder is but commentary. Go study it.’

I have just been reading Karen Armstrong’s *The Bible – the biography*. The sub-title is slightly misleading, in that the book is concerned with interpretations of the text down the ages. She devotes considerable space to the evolution of the Hebrew Bible, the *Tanakh*, which is an acronym of *Torah* (the Law, that is, the five books of Moses), the *Neviim* (the Prophets) and *Kethuvim* (the Writings, that is, Chronicles, Ezra and the like, and the Wisdom books attributed to Solomon). These texts were pored over by rabbis down the centuries, a process known as exegesis, *Midrash* in Hebrew. The conclusion that Hillel was drawing is that at the heart of the scriptures is compassion, which rabbis must strive to reveal.

The crucial event in the later history of Judaism was the destruction of the Temple by Titus in AD 70. One day Rabbi Johanan was walking past the ruins with Rabbi Joshua, who lamented that the Jews could no longer atone for their sins by performing the sacrificial rituals there. Johanan consoled him by asserting: ‘Grieve not, for we have atonement equal to the Temple, the doing of loving deeds.’ He quoted Hosea 6.6: ‘For I desired mercy, not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.’ Perhaps Johanan was also thinking of *Leviticus* xix 18: ‘Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself’.

This is quoted directly by Jesus at *Matt.* xix 19, when he replies to the rich young man, who asked what he must do to have eternal life. This and many other examples suggest that the Gospel writers were well versed in scriptural exegesis. For example, the episode of Christ on the cross being given vinegar is an echo of *Ps.* 69. 21: ‘And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.’ Is the sojourn in Egypt an echo of the Israelites in Egypt, and the Temptation in the Wilderness an echo of the Wandering in Sinai? And do the prophecies about a child in *Isaiah* vii. 14 and ix. 2-7 refer to Jesus or Hezekiah? The passages in Isaiah have as a background the troubled situation in the Kingdom of Judah at the end of the eighth century. In the Old Testament kings, prophets and priests are referred to as anointed – ‘christos’ in Greek, or in Hebrew ‘messiah’.

There are so many Tanakh references in the Gospels that it has been suggested that it might be possible to construct an entire gospel with quotations from Jewish scriptures. The Gospel writers knew the Tanakh from the Greek translation, the Septuagint; Greek and Aramaic were their languages. Christ became the fulfilment of the Law, and the Messiah so longed for in the desperate years after the disaster of AD 70. To reconcile the Jewish heritage to the new world of the diaspora among the gentiles was the task of St Paul.

David Willington



Photograph of Loch Freuchie by Joyce Sampson

British Summer Time Begins 1930-1980

This book, by Ysenda Maxtone Graham, is one which I really think older members of the congregation (which probably covers a large percentage of us) will enjoy.

The author has interviewed people from all sections of society covering this period about their memories of summer holidays. I have thoroughly enjoyed it and it reminds you of so many things that were taken as read during that period: long car journeys with several children cramped up in the back with no seat belts, and roadside picnics along the way; interviews with Dennis Skinner, who never went away, and works holidays and outings; children heading every summer to the same Scottish estates. The over-riding things seemed to be that people liked to do the same thing every year, and parents never knew where their children were. I had not remembered that we were still limited by the amount of currency we could take abroad in the 1970s.

Unusually, I purchased this on my Kindle as it was in hardback, but because I have enjoyed it so much that I am going to get the hardback to pass around among family and friends.

Sonia Dowse



Photograph of Ben Lawers and An Stuc from above Glen Quaich
by Joyce Sampson

Sunday Lectionary February and March

February 6th Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 6. 1-8 {9-13}, Luke 5. 1-11

February 13th Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 17. 5-10, Luke 6. 17-26

February 20th Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Genesis 45. 3-11, 15, Luke 6. 27-38

February 27th Sunday before Lent, the Transfiguration

Exodus 34. 29-35, Luke 9. 28-36 {37-43}

Wednesday March 2nd Ash Wednesday

Joel 2. 1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58. Matthew 6. 1-6, 16-21

March 6th First Sunday of Lent

Deut. 26. 1-11, Luke 4. 1-13

March 13th Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15. 1-12, 17-18, Luke 13. 31-35 or Luke 9. 28-36

March 20th Third Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 55. 1-9, Luke 13. 1-9

March 27th Fourth Sunday of Lent

Joshua 5. 9-12, 2, Luke 15. 1-3, 11b-32

Some Words from the Curate



The opportunity finally arrived over Christmas for me to wear your very generous gift of this beautiful, embroidered chasuble. As the liturgical season for wearing white is now over for a while and as some of you may not have seen it, here are chasuble pics back - and front!

Naturally, Dean Graham suggested the back view would be sufficient!



It was created by Ruth Black, an ecclesiastical embroiderer whose studio is in Inverness. Most of all in this brief article, however, come my huge thanks for this precious gift which I will treasure always. The chasuble will remind me, not that I will ever forget, of your kindness, generosity, of the worship, prayer and challenges we have shared during my curacy. Thank you so much one and all.

As you can see the previous photos were taken at church. In concluding, here is another pic below taken at Crail in January in a rather different outfit.



This proves, I hope, to any sceptics, (Who could that be?!), that we really do swim in the North Sea most days and, yes, we are mad and yes, it is freezing, shocking, incredibly exhilarating and very good, so they say, for the immune system, if not for the waistline - hot chocolate is de rigeur after a dip!

I've read of some who find in this plunge an echo of baptism, a parallel enactment of its immersion and renewal. All of us who swim together, and there are many, agree we emerge from the sea refreshed, renewed and, for me, almost reborn.

Should you ever wish to 'take the plunge', come and join us. We are a friendly bunch – and the hot chocolate is luscious.

My sincere, loving gratitude again for the glorious gift of a chasuble,
Annie.

Plastic Free Shopping



**Tay Larder – 9
South Methven
Street**

In line with the SEC motion for the church to become carbon neutral by 2030, I'm striving to reduce my use of plastic, so I was delighted to find a zero-waste store in the centre of Perth. The pavement sign said: *do your bit to reduce plastic waste by starting small.*

I wanted some washing-up liquid, but didn't have a container that day, so I accepted one of their (free) glass bottles, with a squirter (not free) for use. Since then, it has been cleaning the dishes quite acceptably, so I'll be back for a refill. They also stock a wide range of grains, and soaps. Not all is organic, but they are working on that.

Just sorry I was too late for their very own mulled wine kit – maybe 2022?

Elaine Cameron



A Season for Christian Life

This is an initiative by the College of Bishops for the enlivening of Christian faith, with an emphasis on the renewal of Baptismal vows. It will start on the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, 8th January 2023, and will stress the roles of disciples and apostles in the Christian life. This initiative will be led Bishop Anne of Aberdeen and Orkney who will convene a Steering Group from the Province to guide and monitor progress. More details of this initiative can be found at the back of the church and applications for membership of the Steering Group can be sent to bishopanne@aberdeen.anglican.org

Communication

As well as our own website address for St John's

www.episcopal-perth.org.uk

you can also find information at the following on-line resources:

Diocesan website: www.standrews.anglican.org From there you can access all the Diocesan resources and subscribe to the Diocesan E-newsletter.

Provincial website: www.scotland.anglican.org There you can find out lots of information about the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Inspires Online:

www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/inspires/

Inspires Online is the free e-newsletter from the Scottish Episcopal Church – to subscribe please use the address above and then the sign-up box on the footer of that page.

From the Registers – Eternal Rest

Beverley Williams: 12th January 1965 – 24th November 2021

Barry Ernest Wilson: 2nd December 1939 – 29th December 2021

Joyce Pitt: 27th January 1925 – 12th January 2022

Clergy Availability and Office Hours

Rector's day off – FRIDAYS

Assistant Curate's day off – MONDAYS

The Church Administrator is in the Office:

Mondays 2 – 5 pm, Tuesdays 9 am – 1 pm,

Thursdays 1 – 4 pm

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 April/May issue by:

Sunday 20th March

If you take a hard copy of *Quest* please put a contribution in the tin at the back of the Church.

Contact Information

Rector	The Very Rev. Graham Taylor	634999	rector@episcopal-perth.org.uk
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Retired Assistant Clergy	Rt Rev. Bruce Cameron Rev. Fergus Harris Rev. Canon Shelley Marsh Rev. Canon Alan Tilson		
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People's Warden	David Willington	813787	
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Children	Jean Hendry	623603	
Buildings and Eco	David Macle hose	636147	
Social	Fundraising Group		
Church Activities			
Intercessors/Readers	Liz Thompson	245968	
Flowers	Christine Bracewell	552817	
Magazine	David Willington	813787	
Fellowship	Jean Hendry	623603	
Buggy Club	Eunice McPherson	552337	
Young Church	Jean Hendry	623603	
Links	Ruth Harris	621379	
Christian Aid	Elaine Cameron	441172	
PACT	Jean Hendry	623603	
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www.scotland.anglican.org

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In partnership with
the Scottish Association of
Retired Anglican Clergy

