



St John the Baptist
Scottish Episcopal Church
Perth

Q
U
E
S
T



February and March 2023

From the Rector

Dear Friends,

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas, and I wish you and yours every blessing in this New Year.

As I write this article to you, the day before Candlemas, I'm reminded once again of that wonderful rhyme that we were taught at school:

‘If Candlemas Day be dry and fair,
Half the winter's to come and mair.
If Candlemas Day be wet and foul,
Half o' winter's gane at Yule’.

I wonder what Candlemas day will be like?

Candlemas for me is almost an ending, yet a new beginning. It ends our celebration of the Christmas season; our church nativity is packed up into its box and stored away for next Christmas. However, as it ends the season, so in turn it begins a new one. Christmas is over, and we are in a New Year. New beginnings, new possibilities, new joys that lie ahead, as our Liturgy reminds us.

My heart is warmed on a Sunday at our Eucharist these days, as I look out into the congregation at both services and see how new folks are coming in to join our church family for worship in St. John's. If you are one of them and reading this, then once again you are truly welcome and it's a joy to have you among us.

It's also good to see some different folks now taking part in worship and other activities. This is very heartening, and of course very biblical, as Paul reminds us that we are the body of Christ with many different parts and gifts. For what each one of you offer, I am very grateful.

As we journey into a New Year together, a new season, my biggest prayer is that we will continue to focus on Christ, and journey as pilgrims doing the best we can, where we can, to enable Gods kingdom to grow.

A poem I love, by Cindy Watt:

Ofttimes during my earthly journey I long to be in my home on high
But God says "It's not your time to go to the land of By and By".
So I think I'll just keep on going and toiling along my pilgrim way
And hope someday, "Well done my faithful servant" I will hear my
Saviour say.

I've been sorely tried and tempted and failed so many a test.
But now I want to start over and give the Lord my best.
He has done so much for me and I can never thank him enough.
He raises me up from my sick bed and tells me to be tough.

He heals the broken-hearted and their wounds he binds all up
And says to his dear children "Come and dine with me and sup".
He loves to give his strength to people who are faint and weak.
Jesus has the power we need because he is so lowly and meek.

I thank the Lord for his love and for never giving up on me.
He's the potter and I'm the clay to make me what I should be.
He goes with me in the valley and on the mountain top.
And forever throughout eternity his love will never stop.

As pilgrims at Candlemas and beyond, may we know and experience
the joy of Christ in our new journeys once again.

Much love to you and yours,

Dean Graham.

Home Thoughts from Abroad

Mary and I have just returned from Costa Rica, where we spent a happy fortnight observing wildlife, for example crocodiles and tarantulas, and birds of every description. We learnt about rain and cloud forests, flew through the air on high wires and at the end of a long day sipped a Cuba libre or mojito as we watched the sun set over the Pacific. A sybaritic existence, one might think. But a good book, as well as binoculars, is an essential companion to a holiday. I have been reading Diarmaid MacCulloch on the Reformation, *Europe's House Divided*. He is the foremost authority today on Church history; I have already read his *History of Christianity* and *Life of Cranmer*. His works are weighty but eminently readable.

He covers the period from 1490 to 1700, from Portugal to Transylvania and Scandinavia to Sicily, during which hundreds of thousands of lives were lost in the name of Religion. In 1517 Martin Luther nailed to the door of the church at Wittenburg ninety-five theses against Papal indulgences. This was the first overt statement of many discontents with the Catholic Church, both theological and political. Although Henry VIII wrote an attack on Luther, for which he was rewarded by Pope Leo X with the title of 'Defender of the Faith', this did not prevent him from declaring himself Head of the English Church when the Pope refused to grant him an annulment of his marriage to Catharine of Aragon. His new wife, Anne Boleyn, was a patron of the Protestant cause. Two factors facilitated the spread of theological attacks on the Papacy: the printing press and Latin as the international language of scholarship. As well as Papal authority, matters for debate were the Bible in the vernacular, music in church, Purgatory, clerical celibacy, transubstantiation and much else besides. There was also the split between Lutheranism and other Protestant churches on the Real Presence at the Eucharist.

One's head begins to spin. MacCulloch describes, in exhaustive detail, how these controversies led to widespread blood-letting. Heresy was deemed a particularly vile crime, and rival factions, and not just the Inquisition, enthusiastically tortured and burnt their victims, whether in England or mainland Europe. Bishop Latimer, as the fire was lit beneath him outside Balliol College in Oxford in 1555, cried out to his fellow Protestant victim: 'Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out.' Even in Scotland, witches (not just women) were burnt at the stake, and as late as 1697 a medical student, Thomas Aikenhead, was hanged in Edinburgh for blasphemy. There was the St Bartholomew's Massacre of the Huguenots in France in 1572, but by far the greatest catastrophe in the whole business was the Thirty Years War in Germany between Catholic and Protestant armies (1618-1648), which through sword, famine and disease killed up to a third of the population. Remember Brecht's play *Mother Courage and her children*.

Arthur Golding, an Elizabethan gentleman, observed in 1573:

This may be counted among the greatest evils with which this age is infected, that they who are called Christians are miserably divided about Christ; and yet in truth as the Apostle saith unto us, there is but one God, which is the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. To discourse on this division and the cause thereof would be to some pleasing, to some it would be displeasing. For what one truth can please minds so diversely divided? Would God it could please all to become one in that one Christ whose name we all do carry.

David Willington

Costa Rican Flora & Fauna



Flycatcher



Red Ginger



Laughing Falcon

Front Cover:
Red eyed Leaf Frog

Photographs by
Mary Willington



Great Egret



Crocodile

Iguana



Fellowship

The Fellowship report in the December Quest concluded with anticipation that the December Fellowship meeting would, as is usual for that meeting, follow the usual pattern of Christmas music and food. This is exactly what happened with David Willington rounding up the usual musicians from the congregation who as a choir led us in carols interspersed with readings and Bishop Bruce and Elaine entertained us with their alternative 21st century version of the Nativity!

Christmas refreshments of mince pies, cake and the Fellowship recipe of non-alcoholic mulled wine were enjoyed by all.

Thanks to Gordon for arranging and organising the music.

Traditionally our January meeting is usually a lunch out in a local restaurant or hotel but this year we stuck with tradition in having a lunch. But we didn't go out anywhere; instead it was a DIY effort produced by some of the members held in the Threshold which seemed to go well and I think everyone went home feeling they had been well fed!

At the time of writing this, we are still finalising the order of what is happening over the next 3 months but the date of the next meeting will be Monday 13th February.

Jean Hendry



Sunday Lectionary February and March

February 5th, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 58. 1-9a, (9b-12), 1 Corinthians 2. 1-12 (13-16),
Matthew 5. 13-20

February 12th, Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 30.15-20, 1 Corinthians 3. 1-9, Matthew 5. 21-37

February 19th, Sunday before Lent, the Transfiguration of the Lord

Daniel 7. 9-10, 13-14, 2 Peter 1. 16-19, Luke 9. 28-36

February 22nd, Ash Wednesday

Joel 2. 1-2, 12-17, 2 Corinthians 5. 20b-6. 10, Matthew 6. 1-6, 16-21

February 26th, First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 2. 15-17; 3. 1-7, Romans 5. 12-19, Matthew 4. 1-11

March 5th, Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 12. 1-4a, Romans 4. 1-5, 13-17, John 3. 1-17,
or Matthew 17. 1-9

March 12th, 3rd Sunday of Lent

Exodus 17. 1-7, Romans 5. 1-11, John 4. 5-26

March 19th, Fourth Sunday of Lent, Mothering Sunday

1 Samuel.16. 1-13, Ephesians 5. 8-14, John 9. 13-41

March 26th Passion Sunday

Ezekiel 37. 1-14, Romans 8. 6-11, John 11. 17-45

Eco Group – Advent to Candlemas

Candlemas Reflection

Our 2022 Advent Calendar, *Curlew Christmas*, had an environmental dimension – not a scrap of chocolate! Instead, wonderful images of birds and animals, from eagle to dormouse, finding room for each other around the curlew, reflected that lovely Isaiah passage: *‘the wolf will live with the lamb...the calf and the young lion will feed togetherthere will be neither hurt nor harm in all my holy mountain’*.



It was Advent when the eco group submitted the completed Toolkit provided for each congregation to use in their journey to net zero. We are grateful for the time and care with which the Vestry scrutinised it, approving some, though not all, the suggested ‘Next Steps’. Look out for a possible improvement to the church’s internet signal, and bird boxes in the Remembrance Garden.

Prophetic and practical

This phrase, prophetic and practical, aptly describes the church’s challenge to be net zero by 2030. St John’s first practical task was completing the Energy Footprint Analyser, which automatically calculated emissions of church buildings’ electrical and heating consumption. This created a baseline from which we will be able to track and compare future emissions. Only 54% of congregations in this diocese made this submission: yes, St John’s was one of them! This Footprint Analyser will be repeated annually.

Boundaries of the target; what’s included

At General Synod 2022, Robert Woodford gave an excellent presentation on the meaning of net zero (not the same as carbon neutral), and what constitutes our pathway to net zero 2030. His densely packed, but highly

instructive, forty five minute presentation is now on YouTube, and may be accessed at:

https://youtu.be/Nui_z37UNRM?t=130

Robert notes the unique problems facing churches: our aging buildings, our limited resources of both personnel and money; the infrequent pattern of church use. He itemizes what will be counted: all direct & indirect emissions from church buildings, including Rectories; purchased goods and some travel on church business. There will be annual monitoring/evaluation framework.

Reaching net zero

For our churches, the seminar notes that reaching net zero will mean:

- moving from fossil fuels, and more frequent use of our church buildings
- realising that ‘net zero’ encompasses all aspects of justice - climate, social, and economic.
- embracing ‘Cathedral thinking’: rising to do justice to the heritage of our buildings.
- finding hope for ourselves, and others, created by stepping up to this challenge.

The Net Zero Action Plan Launch will be Wednesday 15th February online 11.30 – 12.30pm. You may register (free) through Inspires online (www.Scotland.anglican.org).

Reflecting on the Isaiah passage

Even among those who agree that the climate emergency must be faced, there are different outlooks and objectives about the best strategies. I trust that, just as the lion and lamb in the Isaiah passage live peaceably together, we keep our lines of communication open and make room for each other, as gift, not threat.

Elaine Cameron



News Latest!

You may be aware that **Sally Foster-Fulton**, Head Christian Aid Scotland has been nominated as the next Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

Val Brown CA Community Relations and Fundraising Manager, has been appointed as the Interim Head of Christian Aid Scotland.

Invitations to two Christian Aid events:

The Gathering 2023

Tuesday Feb 28 10.00 – 12.00 noon, online

Christian Aid staff in Malawi will share about their work, and it will be a time to hear and celebrate what supporters in Scotland are doing.

Food security in Malawi has improved greatly. A Malawian Mum says:



‘Christian Aid’s partner here taught us the importance of having a garden...I used to lack food, but now, I am able to feed my family. I am grateful to Christian Aid. Thank you very much.’

Register online: edinburgh@christian-aid.org

Let me know if you are interested.

Advance note – keep the date:

Perth Christian Aid Coffee Morning
Tuesday March 7 10.30 – 12.00
St Ninian's Cathedral Chapter-House

An opportunity to meet Christian Aid staff informally; to ask questions about their work, and browse resources! Meet local ecumenical Christian Aid supporters!

More information: Elaine Cameron 07977 416250 /elaine.ging

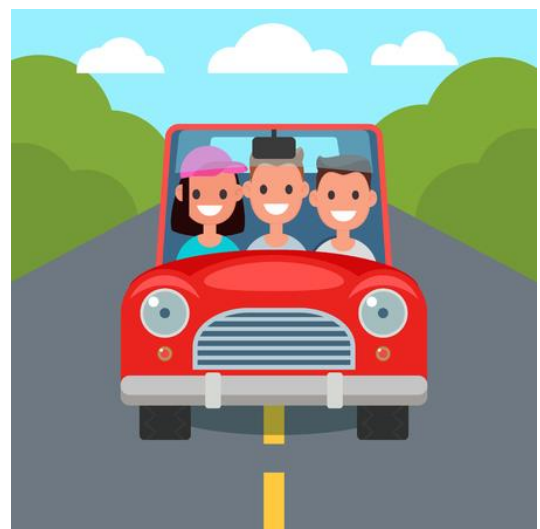
Car Sharing

As a small contribution to achieving St. John's Eco (Climate Change) goals, we are trying to encourage more car sharing. If any member of the congregation -and especially any newcomer - would benefit from a lift to church, or conversely would be happy to offer a lift to church to someone living in their part of town, please get in touch with Alison Swanney, who has offered to act as a contact person.

Tel. 01738 632722, M. 07968 254428.

Email:

iainandalisonswanney@hotmail.co.uk



Services

Weekly Services

Sunday	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday	10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
Every third Sunday there will be prayers for healing		
Thursday	11.00 a.m.	Communion, coffee and a chance to chat

Special Services

19 th February	10.30 am	Transfiguration
22 nd February	7.30 pm	Ash Wednesday
19 th March	10.30 am	Mothering Sunday

**Lenten Reflections and simple lunch are on
Thursdays March 2nd, 16th, 23rd and 30th at 12.15pm**



Brahman Cattle



Caiman

Contact Information

Rector	The Very Rev. Graham Taylor	634999	rector@episcopal-perth.org.uk
Assistant Curate	Rev. Annie MacKay Hughes	01333 451084	annemackayhughes@gmail.com
Retired Assistant Clergy	Rt Rev. Bruce Cameron Rev. Canon Shelley Marsh Rev. Canon Alan Tilson		
Church Officers	Mail to be sent to Office		@episcopal-perth.org.uk
Rector's Warden	Gordon Murch	827034	church-warden@
People's Warden	David Willington	813787	
Administrator	Eleanor McGourty	634999	office@
Lay Representative	Christine Bracewell	552817	
Alternate Lay Rep	Jean Hendry	623603	
Vestry Secretary	Judy Norwell	626789	secretary@
Treasurer	Peter Marsh	575040	treasurer@
Health and Safety	Graham Kingsley-Rowe	07813 822758	hands@
PVG	Malcolm Moore	639963	pvg@
Director of Music	Robin Miller	625903	music@
Sacristan	Vivienne Underwood	07549	651425
Team Convenors			
Ministry	Alan McPherson	552337	
Finance	Peter Marsh	575040	
Communications	Eleanor McGourty	634999	
Website/Facebook	Shelley Marsh	575040	
Children	Jean Hendry	623603	
Buildings and Eco	David Macle hose		
Social	Fundraising Group		
Church Activities			
Intercessors/Readers	Liz Thompson	245968	
Flowers	Christine Bracewell	552817	
Magazine	David Willington	813787	
Fellowship	Jean Hendry	623603	
Young Church	Jean Hendry	623603	
Links	Ruth Harris	621379	
Christian Aid	Elaine Cameron	441172	
PACT	Jean Hendry	623603	
Threshold bookings	Eleanor McGourty	634999	office@episcopal-perth.org.uk

www.scotland.anglican.org

www.standrews.anglican.org

St John the Baptist
Scottish Episcopal Church
Princes Street, Perth, PH2 8LJ



www.episcopal-perth.org.uk
01738 634999
Scottish Charity Number SC 011398



The Very Rev. Graham S. Taylor
23 Comely Bank, Perth PH2 7HU
01738 245922
rector@episcopal-perth.org.uk



In partnership with
the Scottish Association of
Retired Anglican Clergy



From the Editor

Thanks very much for everyone's contributions to this issue. All entries to the editor, Mr David Willington dwillington@hotmail.com for our April/May issue by **Sunday 19th March**