



# St John the Baptist Scottish Episcopal Church Perth

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August and September 2023

# With God on Our Side

On the belt buckle of soldiers of the Wehrmacht was inscribed:

**Gott mit Uns**, God with us.

Armies down the ages have invoked the help of the Almighty. The latest instance is Kiril, Patriarch of Moscow and Putin crony, who has given his Orthodox blessing to the invasion of the Ukraine. Our own history is not without examples. The cry of the Covenanters of 1638 was ‘Jesus and no quarter’. The same fanaticism has been shown by Islamic fundamentalists. The corollary of ‘God on our side’ is that He is not on the side of the enemy and therefore the enemy is ungodly, to be rightfully punished for his unbelief. When both sides are clamouring for the attention of the Almighty, the victor can congratulate himself on his greater fervour. Although Margaret Thatcher made vainglorious noises at Britain’s victory in the Falklands War, Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, publicly prayed for the Argentine dead and bereaved, which earned him unpopularity in some quarters. He was the only archbishop to have fought for his country; he won the Military Cross as a tank commander in WW2.

The Ukrainians are fighting for the defence of their country out of patriotism; this is a powerful motivating force. The men who answered Kitchener’s appeal ‘Your country needs you’ did so largely from a sense of duty, ‘doing their bit’; the Huns were portrayed as brutes as result of their atrocities on Belgium. In WW2 Britain declared war on Germany to defend the freedom of Europe. Both were moral crusades. But it is most unlikely that our soldiers fought for religious reasons, and especially not in ‘policing operations’, such as the recent campaign in Afghanistan. My nephew, who was in the 2nd Parachute Regiment and had some terrible experiences during two tours in that country, told me that the motivation of a soldier was to do the job and not let his mates down.

Why then have chaplains to the forces? Their role is ambiguous. They do not carry arms, but chaplains have won medals; one of our rectors, Canon Vallings, was awarded the DSO and was twice mentioned in dispatches. The Revd Robert Lyon, our Episcopalian martyr, served as Chaplain to Lord Ogilvy's Regiment in the '45. He later wrote: 'I never bore arms, for this I thought inconsistent with my sacred character.' It is sometimes asserted that the role of the chaplain can be summed up as 'Praise God and pass the ammunition'. But that is a mere headline. As well as conducting services, whether at formal 'Church Parade' or at an improvised altar just behind the lines, chaplains have a mission to the spiritual needs of individual members of the armed forces and their families. By definition, this work is behind the scenes. One of my former colleagues at Glenalmond had been a naval chaplain; the ship was his parish. Although he was an officer, he had no place in the command structure, yet had to know about the various roles of the crew. Above all, he had to listen and advise when advice was asked. Members of the armed services are in as much need of spiritual guidance as civilians, and probably more so, since they are confronted by situations that are profoundly disturbing. A priest ministers to his flock wherever it is, and in an infantry battalion perhaps at the risk of his own life.

David Willington



The Sparrow Hawk looks like a grumpy old man; no reference to the author of the above article.

This and other photographs by Patricia Noel-Paton

# Let Justice and Peace Flow

The prophet Amos cries out, “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5: 24). We are called to join the river of justice and peace, to embrace climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities that are most impacted by climate injustice and biodiversity loss.



The Season of Creation is an ecumenical celebration held each year from September 1, World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, to October 4th, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. This year the theme is “Let Justice and Peace Flow” and the symbol chosen to go with this theme is “A Mighty River”, representing biodiversity at risk. The urgency is growing and we must make peace with the Earth and on the Earth visible, while justice calls us to repentance and a change of attitude and actions. When we join the river of justice and peace with others, it creates hope instead of despair.

Our prayers must call for justice not only for human beings, but for all creation. In covenant with peace, we are called to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions.

Join the river of justice and peace: visit the Season of Creation website at <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

Rhiannon Miller  
Eco Group



A Mighty River  
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice  
and Peace Flow**  
Season of Creation 2023

Creator of All,

From your communion of love life sprung forth like a mighty river  
and the whole cosmos came into being.

On this Earth of overflowing love, the Word was made flesh  
and went forth with the life-giving waters  
proclaiming peace and justice for all creation.

You called human beings to till and keep your garden.  
You placed us into right relationship with each creature,  
but we failed to listen to the cries of the Earth  
and the cries of the most vulnerable.  
We broke with the flowing communion of love  
and sinned against you by not safeguarding the conditions for life.

We lament the loss of our fellow species and their habitats,  
we grieve the loss of human cultures,  
along with the lives and livelihoods that have been displaced or perished,  
and we ache at the sight of an economy of death, war and violence  
that we have inflicted on ourselves and on the Earth.

Open our ears to your creative, reconciling and sustaining Word  
that calls to us through the book of Scripture and the book of creation.  
Bless us once again with your life-giving waters  
so that the Creator Spirit may let justice and peace flow in our hearts  
and overflow into all creation.

Open our hearts to receive the living waters of God's justice and peace,  
and to share it with our suffering brothers and sisters,  
all creatures around us, and all creation.

Bless us to walk together with all people of good will  
so that the many streams of the living waters of God's justice and peace  
may become a mighty river all over the Earth.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation,  
Jesus Christ.

Amen.

# Who Do You Think You Are?

I guess many people will have done research into their family origins at some time. And sometimes it can reveal surprising results! Recently I went with my eldest daughter, Rachel, and son, Martin, to Shetland to find out more about the family of Fergus's mother, who were all Shetlanders.

We stayed just outside Lerwick and were blessed with some beautiful weather, enabling us to enjoy the fantastic wildlife – birds, otters, amazing wildflowers, as well as wonderful colours of sea, spray and sky.

The family we were researching lived at Hardwall, a croft in an area of the mainland called Delting. We went to find it, still standing but now with no roof. It was two stories high but at times was accommodating up to eleven people, plus the animals in the outbuildings. Peter, the patriarch, born in 1832, was a fisherman and farmer, fishing being the main source of income, farming the means of suppling food for the family. Life was extremely hard, especially as they were tenant farmers and subject to particularly harsh terms from agents of landowners, and merchants who bought their produce.

We learned that Peter, like many others, engaged in a fair bit of smuggling, trading with the Dutch fishing fleet for tobacco and spirits, which they then sold 'without fear'. He was caught more than once but only once punished, with bail instead of a jail sentence and a fine of £67, which must have been a very large amount in those days. Presumably the smuggling had earned him enough to manage the fine!

By the time the family were living in Hardwall it seems Peter had mostly given up the fishing. There would be plenty of work at home looking after the animals and growing hay, wheat and potatoes etc. Probably everyone would help with these tasks.

In the museum we saw a photograph of barefoot children helping to carry the peat, and seeming to have fun. There was also a photograph of women

carrying peat on their backs and knitting as they walked. It does appear, however, that Peter and Margaret's children received a reasonable education, so maybe they can't have been too tied down to physical labour.

While we were at Hardwall we met a Shetland farmer living opposite who regaled us with stories about all the families who had lived there and roundabout. He knew everyone's dates of birth, marriage, death etc - an amazing man.

Eventually the whole family moved, in stages, to Edinburgh where they started a grocery business. Peter and Margaret were in their fifties when they moved there in 1890, and their granddaughter Blanche, Fergus's mother was born there. Although she had never lived in Shetland she retained strong affiliations and kept in touch with a number of her cousins. We have more recently met up with other members of the family, John Blanche and Ian Tait, to whom I am indebted for much of this information.

Ruth Harris

Cliffs at Hermanes – the most northerly part of the UK



3.30am!

# Coronation Lunch





# Sunday Lectionary August and September

**August 6<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 10

Isaiah 55.1-5, Romans 9. 1-5, Matthew 14. 13-21

**August 13<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 11

1 Kings 19. 9-18, Romans 10. 5-15, Matthew 14. 22-33

**August 20<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 12

Isaiah 56. 1,6-8, Romans 11. 1-2a, 29-32, Matthew 15. 21-28

**August 27<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 13

Isaiah 51. 1-6, Romans 12. 1-8, Matthew 16. 13-20

**September 3<sup>rd</sup>** Pentecost 14

Jeremiah 15.15-21, Romans 12. 9-21, Matthew 16.21-28

**September 10<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 15

Ezekiel 33. 7-11, Romans 13. 8-14, Matthew 18. 15-20

**September 17<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 16

Genesis 50. 15-21, Romans 14.1-12, Matthew 18. 21-35

**September 24<sup>th</sup>** Pentecost 17 – HARVEST THANKSGIVING

Jonah 3. 10 - 4. 11, Philippians 1. 21-30, Matthew 20. 1-16

## From the Registers – Eternal Rest

Kenneth (Ken) William Thompson: 25<sup>th</sup> February 1947 – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023



## **Update from June/July Quest -**

**St John's Episcopal /St Ninian's Cathedral Christian Aid Walk  
May 2023 raised the amazing total of £2000.00.**

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way – donors, helpers, supporters, walkers – this was a superb collaborative effort! It means Christian Aid can continue to help Malawian families feed their families after Cyclone Freddie's flood waters recede.

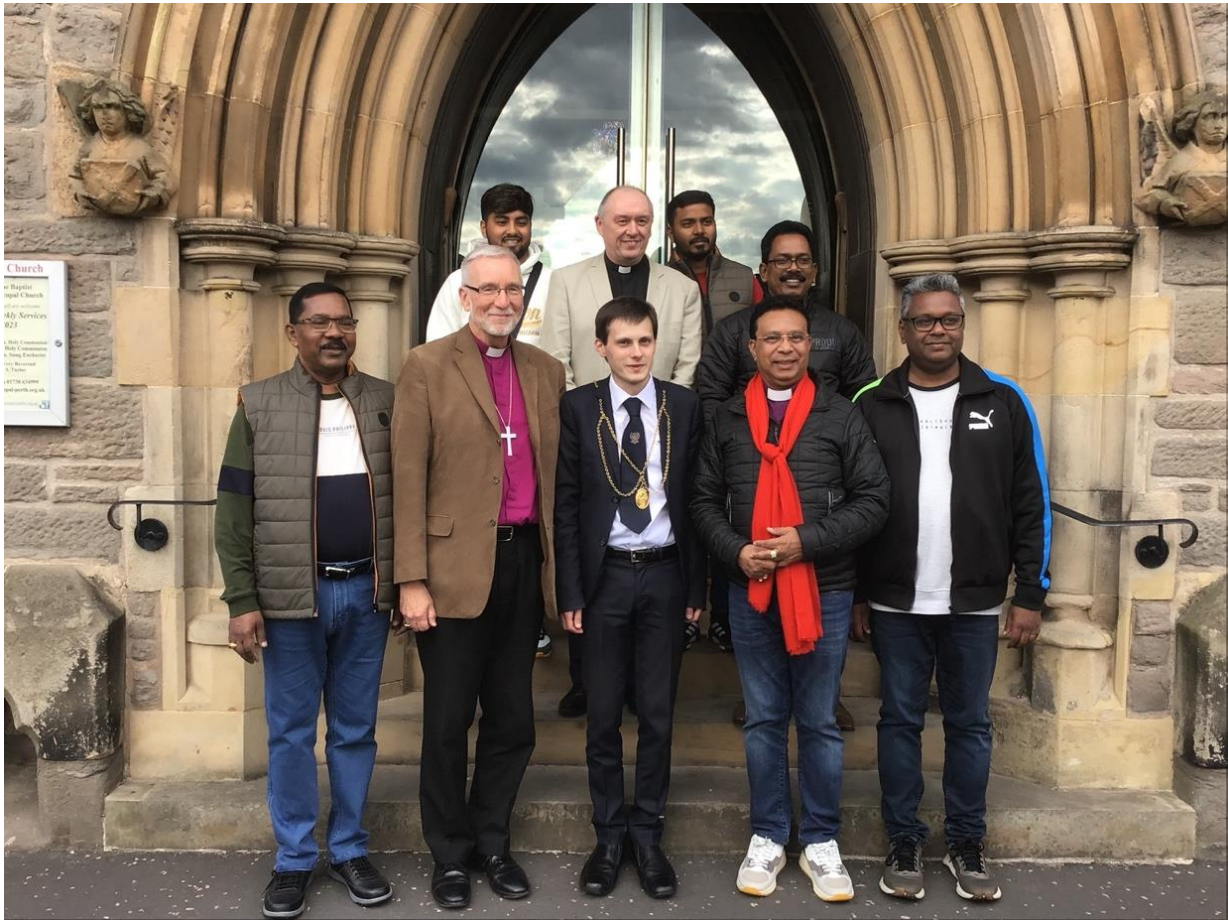
Of course, our donation will also enable Christian Aid's fight against poverty in 28 other countries to continue: work such as the Ukrainian Humanitarian Appeal, and the DEC Turkey - Syrian Earthquake Appeal, providing vital aid, and developing long-term sustainable development projects.

I hope many of you were as pleased as I was to learn that the Head of Christian Aid Scotland, Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, spoke at our SEC General Synod in her capacity as Moderator of the Church of Scotland 2023/2024. This is the first time a current C. of S. Moderator has spoken there. Sally believes that what congregations do locally is critical, and is one of the ways the church's voice is given validity when speaking truth to power. We wish her well for her Moderatorial year.

During Sally's year as Moderator, Val Brown, CAid Church & Community Manager, will be the interim Head of Christian Aid, Scotland.

Grateful blessings for all the fund-raising,  
Elaine and team

# Visit



St John's Episcopal Church, Perth celebrated as friends from the joint Diocese of Calcutta visited.

The Right Rev. Paritosh Canning and five delegates from the Diocese of Calcutta enjoyed two fun-filled days travelling around Fife and Highland Perthshire as they met and worshiped with congregations across the Diocese of St Andrew, Dunkeld and Dunblane.

Their visit concluded with a lovely curry night at St John's where they were joined by The Provost of Perth & Kinross, Xander McDade.

Pictured: The Right Rev. Ian Paton, the Right Rev. Paritosh Canning, the Very Rev. Graham Taylor, Provost Xander McDade, Rev. Asa Kiran Parichha, Rev. Pradip Kumar Nanda, Mr Raghav Naik, Mr Ritesh Sarkar and Mr Ashutosh Rai.

# *Sugar, Slaves and High Society:*

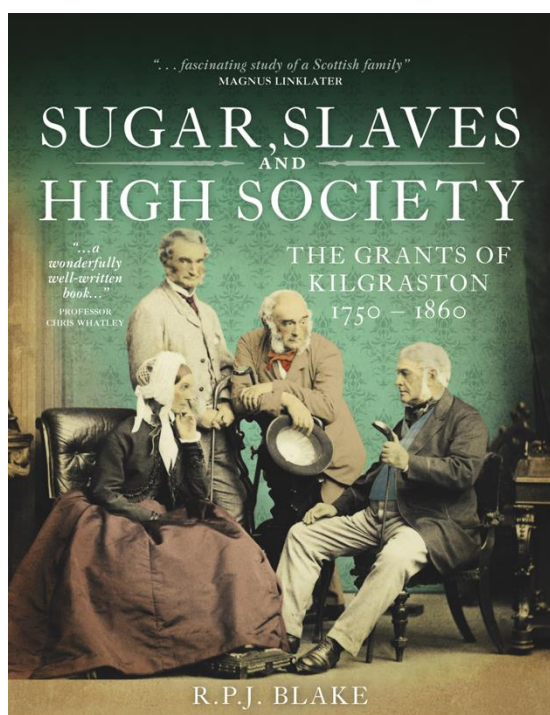
## *The Grants of Kilgraston 1750-1860*

An illustrated talk will be given by Richard Blake at

St John's Episcopal Church, Princes Street, Perth

On Thursday 12 October 2023

At 7.15 pm (doors open 6-30 pm for a glass of wine)



Richard Blake's book, *Sugar, Slaves and High Society: The Grants of Kilgraston 1750-1860* (Buskin Books; RRP £25; ISBN 978-1-3999-4352-9), is a carefully researched history based on a family archive. It has been the subject of features in the Scotsman and the Courier, and on BBC Scotland. It has been called a "...fascinating study of a Scottish family." (Magnus Linklater) and "...a wonderfully well-written book..." (Prof. Chris Whatley).

The book recounts how repatriated wealth from the sugar plantations in Jamaica funded the rebuilding of Kilgraston House, near Bridge of Earn, and extravagant lifestyles. It also questions the morality of the ownership of slaves who were hidden in plain sight.

This event is being held in St John's because of the church's connections with Kilgraston. John, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Laird, was a member of the Vestry, while the pulpit panels were modelled by his daughter, Mary. Her bust of Queen Victoria is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, while her religious work can be found in the cathedrals of Lichfield, Winchester and St Mary's, Edinburgh. John's two brothers became knights of the realm: Francis, a president of the Royal Academy of Arts; and Hope, a celebrated general.

Members of the congregation and their friends are invited to attend the illustrated talk, when signed copies of the book will be for sale. There will be no charge for attendance and Richard will donate 10% of the price of each book sold on the evening to The Tumbling Lassie, which exists to raise awareness and funds for charities fighting against modern slavery and people trafficking and to help survivors in Scotland and beyond (<https://www.tumblinglassie.com/>) .

In order to get an idea of numbers, it would be appreciated if those who wish to attend could let Richard know at [admin@buskinbooks.co.uk](mailto:admin@buskinbooks.co.uk) .

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## **Christian Aid Quiz Night**

**7pm Friday 1 September 2023**

Letham St Mark's Church, Rannoch Rd, Perth PH1 2HH

Everyone welcome!

Teams of 4 people. Or come by yourself and join a team on the night!

Price: £6, including refreshments, payable on the night.

*Bring & buy plants / produce*

Further information:

Gill Kaye Mob 07801 818535

[Gill\\_kaye@hotmail.com](mailto:Gill_kaye@hotmail.com)

## Book Recommendation

I'm reading a book I picked up on Holy Island last month when visiting with Irene Rose, called 'The things you can see only when you slow down' by Haemin Sunim, a Zen monk and former professor. It is a beautiful read about reflection and meditation in our busy lives. He hopes that reading the book will inspire us to connect with the kinder and wiser side of ourselves. His simple, compassionate teachings transcend religion, borders and ages and serve as a calming reminder of the strength and joy that come from slowing down.

By connecting to the kinder and wiser side of ourselves, I believe it will also encourage us to be kinder to others. We could all do with a little kindness in life.

God bless.

Jackie Thomson

*If Jesus, Buddha and Confucius were all alive and  
gathered in the same place, would they argue over who is right?  
Or would they respect and admire one another's teaching?  
Religious conflict can often be blamed  
not on the founders of religions but on their fanatical followers.*

## Thank You

Thank you all for your lovely cards, flowers and expressions of sympathy that I, Richard and Helen have received from our friends at St Johns. I would also like to thank those who attended Ken's service at the crematorium, Dean Graham who took the service of celebration so beautifully, and Robin who played magnificently and kept us all going in the hymns. We raised the fantastic sum of £750 in donations to the Macmillan nurses at Cornhill who were amazing in their care and support for Ken and myself in the last few months.

Thank you to you all.

Liz Thompson

# Contact Information

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Sacristan	Vivienne Underwood	07549 651425	
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Finance	Peter Marsh	575040	
Communications	Eleanor McGourty	634999	
Website/Facebook	Shelley Marsh	575040	
Children	Jean Hendry	623603	
Buildings & Eco	David Macle hose		
Social	Fundraising Group		
<b>Church Activities</b>			
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	<a href="mailto:office@episcopal-perth.org.uk">office@episcopal-perth.org.uk</a>

[www.scotland.anglican.org](http://www.scotland.anglican.org)

[www.standrews.anglican.org](http://www.standrews.anglican.org)

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## From the Editor

Thanks very much for everyone's contributions to this issue. All entries to the editor, Mr David Willington [dwillington@hotmail.com](mailto:dwillington@hotmail.com) for our October/November issue by **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September**