

Discerning the truth



Janice Scott *reflects on* Mark 3:20-end

After allowing his disciples to pluck grain on the sabbath Jesus heals someone with a withered hand. People are so shocked by his blatant disregard of sabbath laws that they conclude that he must be “out of his mind”. When his family turn up, it is possibly to take him into safekeeping. This prompts Jesus to teach more about love, saying that family consists of far more than blood relations.

Rest and relaxation –
a series for
summer

We're all going on a
summer holiday,
by Heather Smith

Most of us look forward to a holiday. It may be a week or two of complete physical rest or an adventurous break that takes us away from normal activities. If we can leave the smartphone and

tablet buried deep in our luggage, brought along for emergencies only, how much better that rest will be?

Jesus, when he withdrew from the crowds to spend time alone, was not plagued by devices endlessly ringing, bleeping and vibrating. True rest takes us away from the concerns of the everyday, where our brains are constantly processing the latest news and events, or becoming embroiled in the concerns of work or our friendship groups. Jesus knew how to really rest. He withdrew into the desert – a truly isolated space on the edge of the safety of the city, where the bustle of the streets was out of earshot and he could focus on the stillness of God. ☺

“Our love to God is measured by our everyday fellowship with others and the love it displays.

Andrew Murray

Into this melee come scribes from Jerusalem, out to trap Jesus and sway the people with fake news. In order to cast doubt on Jesus’ healing miracles, they accuse him of being in league with the devil. Jesus points out the illogicality of this: “How can Satan cast out Satan?” he asks. He goes on to say that the only sin which can never be forgiven is one against the Holy Spirit. The scribes have deliberately twisted the truth. By saying that God’s gift of healing through Jesus comes from the devil, they have denied the presence of God and reversed the concepts of good and evil.

We are subjected to so much fake news today that it is sometimes difficult to discern what is true. But one thing is sure – to deliberately twist the truth to make evil appear good and vice versa is still a sin against the Holy Spirit. ☺

Loving God, give me the determination always to search for the truth, and when this puts me in opposition to popular opinion, give me the courage to stand up for what is right. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

The joy of service

by Victor Osoro

One of the churches I serve is so remote that I can get there only once or twice a year. The journey takes a good eight or nine hours’ drive through the jungle, on extremely poor roads, with eleven rivers to cross and no bridges. When the rains come it’s impossible to get there, so the route is open for only about four months of the year.

There are other dangers apart from the weather. Not so long ago most of the houses in one of the villages were torched and people were forced to move. Occasionally we are warned about cattle rustlers, but by God’s grace I haven’t encountered any dangerous situations.

When I do get there, I meet people who are hungry for the Gospel. People take their mission seriously and so, for all the difficulties, there is so much joy in serving people in this way.

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Church of Scotland: Parish of Orphir & Stenness

Interim Moderator: Rev June Freeth 721449

Locum Minister: Rev Martin Prentice 851139

Session Clerk: Nicol 811242

Kirk Information

There is a loop system. Adjust hearing aids to benefit.

A warm invitation is extended to everyone to meet in the hall, after the service, for a cup of tea or coffee.

Intimations

Today Stated Annual Meeting to follow the service.

Tuesday 7:30pm: Choir

Thursday 10-12: Community Café

Reading Mark 9:33-37

Hymns

157	Sing of the Lord's goodness Nature's Beauty" <i>Tune: Regent Square</i>
123	God is love: let heaven adore him
243	Touch the earth lightly
180	Give thanks with a grateful heart
706	For the healing of the nations

Nature's Beauty *Tune: 'Regent Square'*

Nature knows her sounds and movements, Heard and seen each day and night;
All her life in rich abundance, Fills my heart with great delight;
Celebrate with adoration; Thankful for the world so bright.

Fearsome winds cause trees to whimper; Storms can force the clouds to cry;
Raindrops, snowflakes dance together; Sun and moon wink in reply;
Celebrate with adoration, All the wonders of the sky.

Celebrate all hidden textures; Value all the roots below;
Celebrate all covered splendour; Value beauty not on show;
Celebrate with adoration; Thankful for the world we know.

Creatures bold and creatures timid, Offer beauty, each unique;
Trees and flowers paint a picture, On the plain and mountain peak;
Celebrate with adoration; All revealed for those who seek.

We are blest with such profusion; Beauty bursts out everywhere;
If we take the time to ponder, We may find a thankful prayer;
Celebrate with adoration, Thankful for the world we share (*George Stuart*).

Doxology May God's blessing surround you each day,
As you trust Him and walk in his way,
May his presence within guard and keep you from harm,
Go in peace, go in joy, go in love.