

The tug of the Spirit



Andrew Lyon *reflects on* John 3:1-17

If last week, at Pentecost, we received the Holy Spirit, today's readings tell us more about what that Spirit does in our lives and how it directs us. Everyone must be born both of water and of Spirit if they are to enter the kingdom of God, Jesus says.

Rather than being one moment of spiritual awakening upon which I look back with fervour, for me this rebirth is a constant renewing of my faith, a daily reorientation Godwards. What needs redemption today in my life? Where is renewal necessary?

Surrendering to the leading of the Spirit means a childlike trust in how it points us towards Christ, and a pattern of life modelled on dying to the self and being reborn to a life led by God.

The metaphor used for the Spirit in today's Gospel is the wind. It "blows where it chooses... you do not know where it comes from or where it goes." This is the nature of wind: unpredictable, powerful, uncontainable – dangerous even. And so it is with the Spirit. As newly born children of God we do not know the route we are to follow, but only our ultimate destination, which is Christ himself. Being attentive to the tug of the Spirit each day enables us to follow the way that leads to eternal life. 🌿

Beating the bounds

by Lisa Tulfer

The custom of beating the bounds has seen something of a revival in recent years. The customs associated with the Rogation Days (the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Ascension Day) are often moved to the Sunday before, which is now known as Rogation Sunday. It is about praying, not only for the crops in the fields, but – depending

on the nature of the parish – also for the shops, businesses, workers, students and visitors.

Although the ancient practice had been in decline since its peak around 1700, it has survived in the form of Rogationtide processions in places such as Oxford, the Tower of London and St Albans. From Veryan in Cornwall to Bellerby in North Yorkshire, people walk the boundaries of their parishes at Rogationtide. Prayer (before, during and after the walk) plays an important part, as does food – either in the form of refreshments along the route, or a hearty pub lunch at the end. 🌿

Most Holy Trinity, I pray that I will surrender myself to you, my God. Let me be carried by the rush of the wind of the Spirit as each day I commit myself afresh to following you. Amen.

Chaplain's blog – exams

by Marcus Bull

The approach of exams is stressful for everyone, so we start gearing up for it in good time. We serve an area in which more than thirty per cent of the children are living in poverty. Yes, we care about the issues our students are facing, but more often than not we find that the best pastoral care is to put a comforting arm around a shoulder

and guide a student to their next timetabled lesson. The head teacher calls it "tough love". It's tempting to let students miss science to talk things through, or have time out in the Sacred Space. Of course we hope for much more for them than results, but good qualifications are pretty much the only way for our kids to escape the poverty trap, so our priority is to make sure that they stay on track.

If you know students about to take exams, or their teachers, please pray for them. 🌿

“It is not the body's posture but the heart's attitude that counts when we pray.

Billy Graham

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

Tuesday 8pm: Choir

Thursday 10-12: Community Café

Sunday 3rd 2:30pm: Our Kirk is responsible for taking the short service at St Peter's home. All welcome – come swell the singing.

Sunday 10th: Stated Annual Meeting to follow the service.

Urgently needed - Bakers and servers: Could you bake for the cafe or spare a couple of hours on a Thursday morning to serve and chat to folk? It would be gratefully appreciated. The same few folk always have to bake and serve. Help would be fantastic. Liz

Café Transport: If you, or anyone you know would like to come to the Community Café on a Thursday morning but don't have transport, please get in touch with Anne Groundwater on 811394 to arrange a lift.

Reading Romans 8: 12-17 John 3:1-17

Hymns
111 Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty
123 God is Love: let heaven adore him (T. Hyfrydol 519)
724 Christ's is the world in which we move
118 Womb of life and source of being (T. Abbot's leigh 642)
137 All things bright and beautiful

First Prayer L: So we praise You.
All: **We praise and worship You.**

Prayers of Intercession L: Lord, give to your people
All: **The blessing of peace.**

Doxology 786

May the God of peace go with us as we travel from this place;
May the love of Jesus keep us firm in hope and full of grace.