

# The cost of love

Rob Hayter *reflects on* Luke 2:22-40

All the characters in today's Gospel reading are faithful to and nurtured by the best of the Jewish tradition. It is to such faithful folk that God reveals fresh truth. Enter Simeon – close to God, sensitive to God, guided by the Spirit. Such a person has the knack of turning up at the right time, understanding the significance of what they see, and saying the right thing. While many would see just a child, Simeon sees salvation – salvation for all the earth. Simeon is led by the Spirit and the Spirit is always alive and fresh. The freshness and power of Simon's words amazes Jesus' parents.

Then we hear of the cost. No new move of God comes without a price. It is not only Jesus who will suffer, but those who love him – especially his mother. Love costs. Why is there a cost? Because the light of Jesus will not leave the status quo unchallenged. Things have been going on which should not have been. People are not who they appear to be. Some exalted people will be toppled. The nature of power is such that people do not like to lose it and will fight to keep it. Hence the suffering.

The other side of the coin is that some who have been ignored will turn out to be great. This is the arrival of God's kingdom of truth. God's upside down kingdom, where the exalted are humbled and the humble are exalted. ☺



**Lord God, by your grace we may be like Anna and Simeon, guided by the Spirit and knowing the significance of what we see. Enable us to bring your word to situations, as Simeon did. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## World Wetlands Day

*Today is World Wetlands Day. Christine Clark looks at their value and environmental significance.*

What fun it is, properly shod in good wellies, to visit a wetland area, watching the wildlife, large and small, seeing how creatures thrive in their habitats. It is a joy to see young children crouch down to examine an animal or bird going about its business, oblivious

of its audience. Wetlands really are a fantastic part of God's wonderful creation.

Great family time though this is, the need for wetlands is far greater. World Wetlands Day raises awareness of the value of wetlands for humanity and the planet, stressing the benefits of biologically diverse ecosystems – not only to provide habitats for species, but as coastal buffers against storms and flooding, and to filter water by breaking down harmful pollutants.

So why not look up one of the many events happening all around the country – including walks, talks and practical conservation. To find out more visit: [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org) ☺

## Walking with Poppy

Being heard

by Gillian Cooper

Poppy and I walk past the demonstrators gathered opposite Parliament. I am not sure what they want, but they are shouting very loudly about it, and waving placards. It is Sunday, so there is no one in there listening anyway. But no doubt the demonstrators will go home feeling they have somehow made their point. Their

voices have been heard, if only by Poppy and me and a stream of tourists.

Today we hear a voice from the distant past, a voice that has reverberated down the centuries in Christian tradition and liturgy. It is a voice that proclaims salvation. Who would have thought that the words of an old man in the Jerusalem Temple could carry such weight? "A light for revelation to the Gentiles", Simeon sings, and his song is repeated at every Evensong. He makes no demands, but we have heard him, and so has the God for whom he so patiently waited. ☺

**“God is silent. Now if only man would shut up.”**  
Woody Allen (born 1935), writer, actor and director

## Church of Scotland: Orphir and Stenness Parish

**Interim Moderator:** Rev June Freeth 721449

**Locum Minister** Rev Martin Prentice    **Session Clerk:** Nicol 811242

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

**A warm invitation is extended to everyone to meet in the hall at the back of the church, after the service, for a cup of tea.**

### Intimations

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb – 7pm** – Fellowship. Come along and join in the discussion or just come along and listen.

**8pm** – Choir

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> Feb – 10am – 12noon** Community Café in the kirk hall

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – 7.30pm.** Final of the sessions about leading worship in the Milestone kirk in Dounby, led by Linda Broadly, locum minister.

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February – 7pm** Trustees/Session Meeting

**Blue Door:** Thank you to everyone who helped in any way with our week in the Blue Door. Thanks to those who organised, worked, baked, donated goods, collected donations and bought from the Blue Door. We raised approximately £2500.

### **Readings:**

Roman's 5 v 1 to 5    Ephesians 1 v 3 to 12

### **Hymns:**

H192 All our hope on God is founded

H166 Lord of all hopefulness

H737 Will your anchor hold

H32 As pants the heart

H543 Longing for Light

JP14 Be Bold, Be strong

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# Hope

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**Doxology** Hymn 786