

Tipping the balance



Heather Smith *reflects on* Genesis 15:1-12. 17-18

Abram had not exactly covered himself with glory since God set him on his path to the land that God planned to give him. After arriving in Canaan with his nephew Lot, a famine sent him to Egypt in search of food and, afraid for his own safety, he said that his wife Sarai was his sister but neglected to mention that she was also his wife. Poor Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house, but when God sent plagues Pharaoh realised something was not quite right. On the other hand, Abram bravely rescued Lot when he had been captured by enemies and stuck scrupulously to a promise not to take any goods from the King of Sodom. In today's reading, God makes a covenant with Abram. Recognising that Abram is, like all of us, neither all good nor all bad, God gives Abram the chance to believe and, when he does, it tips the balance.

It seems odd that just believing counted as being righteous, no matter what Abram had done in the past, or would do in the future. But believing God is the key to right behaviour. Abram did not always get it right even after this hugely significant commitment of God's, and neither do we. But believing works deep inside us, working its change, slowly but surely making us the people that God intends us to be. 😊

God, whose grace is eternal, plant within us a deep seed of belief that sustains and changes us as we journey with you. Amen.

Walking with Poppy

Not knowing best

by Gillian Cooper

As Poppy gets older, she gets more certain that she knows best, and more determined to have her own way. So she protests when we walk in the wrong kind of weather (basically anything other than dry and cool), or when we turn the

wrong way at a familiar corner, or when she hasn't had enough treats. But if in the rain or on the unfamiliar route we meet her friend Archie, all is suddenly well again.

Lent encourages us to examine ourselves, including our tendency to think we know best. I know that as I have grown older I have become less open to new ideas and more set in my regular routines of thought and belief as well as behaviour. I need to be open to new thoughts and new adventures, taking a chance that God may have surprise and delight for me round the unfamiliar corner. 😊

Letters from a medical student

by Tabitha Leask

Dear *Sunday Link*,
Wow, this course is full on! Everyone tells you it is a lot of work. I thought I knew what I was getting into but... this is certainly something to get used to. But I'm having a good time. After four years of not studying it is great to be using my brain

again. Medicine is fascinating – the human body has so much more going on inside it than I had ever thought, and it is so clever. I find myself marvelling every day at something new and for those who don't believe in a creator God... well, I don't understand how they can't.

That being said, it is impossible. It is impossible to remember all they teach. I am slowly accepting all I can do is to remember as much as I can, and not be afraid to say I don't know or ask for help when I struggle. 😊

“Those who are cheerful and merry at table will benefit from their food.”
Sirach 30:25

Church of Scotland: Orphir and Stenness Parish

www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/ORPHIRANDSTENNESS

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. Switch off phones. They cause interference with the organ. Thank you.

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 or coffee.

Intimations

Today: There will be a retiring collection in aid of the RNLI.

Tuesday 7-8pm. Fellowship Lent Study on Justice - the Heart of Jesus. All welcome.

Tuesday 8pm: Choir

Thursday 10am – 12noon: Community Café in the kirk hall

Blue Door – 27th January to 1st February 2020 . We are looking for a volunteer or group of volunteers to take on the planning for this fund raising event. Its never too early to start collecting items - we will need lots , and we will need a dry place to store them. Please contact Nicol or Carol if you can help. Thank you

Readings: Mathew 8 v23-27
Psalm 65

Hymns: 251 I the Lord of Sea & Sky
737 Will your anchor hold
509 Jesus calls us o're the tumult
260 Eternal father strong to save

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 sin,
Go in peace, go in joy, go in love.