

Pestering

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* Luke 18:1-8

All parents know how children can pester. And they also know the relief of giving in and letting them have whatever they are after, for the sake of a bit of peace. The story Jesus tells imagines God like an exasperated parent, giving the children what they want. But of course there is more to it than that. The issue here is not biscuits or sweets, but justice. That is what the widow in the story wants, that is what God is being pestered for, and so that is what God is willing to give. But is that all?

Our Old Testament reading tells of Jacob wrestling with God all

night, even after he is injured. He does not want justice. Justice for him would involve punishment for all his cheating and conniving. He wants, and gets, a blessing, and also a new name, Israel – the name that he will pass on to his descendants, God's people.

We may think we want justice, our just deserts, but what we need is a blessing, and the name God gives us, his children, despite our faults and failings. "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Faith to pester God not for what we want, but for what we need? ☺

God of justice and blessing, give us faith to know that we can come to you with our requests, and wisdom to know what we need, that we may persist in asking for justice on earth, and receive your blessing now and in all eternity. Amen.

Faith and disability

God understands sign language
by Heather Smith

You may never have encountered anyone for whom British Sign Language (BSL) is their first language, but it's more common than you might think. The deaf community has a vibrant, supportive culture, often with special church services. Many say, however, that they would like to feel confident and included

attending any service. Deaf people may often feel left out, but be keen to join in, while non-deaf churchgoers may want to include them, but struggle to know how.

Neil Robinson, the Salisbury Diocese Minister with Deaf and Hard of Hearing People, says he has two identities – in Christ, and as a deaf person. When they come together he is at his happiest. As a newly ordained priest, his training vicar encouraged him to work to his strengths and abilities, and to believe that he has a great deal to contribute because of, not despite, his deafness. In turn, Neil wants to encourage other deaf people to feel the same. Neil prays in BSL because, of course, God understands. ☺

“Truth is the highest thing that man may keep.

Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400), English poet



Finding God on the Smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

If there is a heavy dew when I go to check the sheep early in the morning I can see their tracks on the grass telling me where they've been overnight. There's a word in Welsh, *cynefin*, which is about familiar paths; the homely feeling of being on the path where you belong

in the landscape, rooted by relationship and history, that fits this early morning experience for me. There's no adequate English translation, but I experience what I think it means both in the sheep field and in my sinking into my local Welsh community and in the relationship I have with God here.

I follow the sheep paths, seeing where they've stood to eat a particularly tasty weed, or where they've lain down and there's no dew at all, just a soft hollow in the green. Such rootedness is a slow process but it leads to abundant life. ☺

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 22nd Oct 7pm - 8pm - We are looking at 'Each of us is special to God' and 'Disabilities - knowing our true value'. Please come along and join the discussion or just come along and listen. All welcome.

Tuesday 22nd Oct - 8pm – Choir in the kirk hall

Thursday 24th Oct – 10am – 12noon Community Café in the kirk hall

Pastoral Care - The pastoral care team would like to expand the work they are doing and invite anyone with an interest and bit of spare time to contact Carol or Olivia.

The collection for the International Justice Mission at our Freedom Sunday Service came to £178. <https://www.ijm.org/> Thank you for making a difference.

Readings:

Genesis 8 v 22

Deuteronomy 16 v 13-17

Matthew 13 v 18-23

Hymns:

Hymn 233 Come ye thankful people come

Hymn 103 Fill your hearts with joy and gladness

Hymn 229 We plough the fields and scatter

Hymn 230 Praise God for the harvest

Hymn 181 For the beauty of the earth

Harvest's a time to show that we care,
To bring gifts of food to the table to share

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

