

Is it all worth it?

Heather Smith *reflects on* Luke 8:26-39

If you have ever embarked on a small alteration to the house, you will know that the work can quickly spiral. Perhaps you just want to move a few electrical sockets. But you don't want the wiring to be visible, so you end up with patches of plaster on the wall. Now you have to do some painting – but you can't match the existing colour, so you have to paint the whole room and you end up wishing you'd just left the sockets where they were.

Things were pretty bad for the Gerasene demoniac. Even though Jesus had tried to heal him he screamed to be left alone. His problems (or demons) were legion and no matter how bad things are, sometimes it seems safer not to make any changes.

The demoniac's problems were making things difficult for others, too. He had to be kept under guard and shackled, but sometimes he even managed to escape his chains. In the end the solution was to send the demons into a herd of pigs, where they made things so difficult that the pigs ran off a cliff and drowned.



This in turn made things difficult for the swineherds, who were both unhappy and extremely frightened.

So was it all worth it? Everyone had quite an experience and some valuable pigs had been lost. But a suffering and excluded man was returned, healthy, to his community. 😊

God, your healing in our lives is worth any amount of trouble and upheaval, even when it seems too disruptive and easier to leave things as they are. Teach us to accept and embrace your healing. Amen.

The chaplain's blog

The Tian Tian Big Buddha

by Marcus Bull

Last summer, the holiday of a lifetime enabled me to visit the Tian Tian Big Buddha, on Lantau Island, Hong Kong. It is the largest seated outdoor statue of the Buddha. It is reached via a

hair-raising 3.5-mile cable car ride, followed by a climb of 268 steps. At 112 feet tall and 250 metric tons of bronze, it is simply breathtaking.

By the way, most Buddhists do not believe in God. They certainly do not worship the Buddha. But they do follow his teachings and his example to help them become the best person they can be.

As a teacher of RE, I am fascinated by the artefacts and worship of religions other than Christianity. Understanding and respecting the huge variety of ways that people, ancient and modern, express their worship is the first step, surely, to loving our neighbour. 😊

Summer

by Ricarda Witcombe

In summer the pace changes and many of the things that shape our lives come to a pause. Bible study groups, lunch clubs, home groups and other events take a break for the summer months. Leaders and hosts need a chance to be refreshed before it all begins again in the autumn. For some, the change in pace is a

relief and gives much needed time and space. For others, the summer stretches out empty and it can be a challenging and lonely time. As you look around at your church or community, are there people you might phone or visit? Or perhaps you could meet at a local cafe one afternoon. If you are feeling a bit at a loss, the chances are that others are as well. Summer gives opportunity for church to be family – and to see what simple things we can do that may make all the difference to our lives. 😊

“What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God.

Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988), Swiss theologian and priest

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

Tuesday 8 pm: Choir

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

Sunday 30th June: The annual joint service with Flotta and Hoy and Walls will take place in Flotta. The ferry will leave Houton at 9.50 am, calling at Lyness and arriving at Flotta at 11 am. The ferry back leaves at 3 pm.

Reading: Galatians 3:23-29
Luke 8: 26-39

Hymns: **510** Jesus calls us here to meet him
544 When I needed a neighbour
251 I the Lord of sea and sky
355 You Lord are both lamb and shepherd
167 Guide me O Thou Great Jehovah

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.