

Lord of the waves

Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Genesis 2:4b-9. 15-end; Psalm 65 and Luke 8:22-25

Today's Old Testament, Psalm and Gospel readings all contain references to that great element upon which all life is dependent, which covers over seventy per cent of the earth – water. In the great story of creation in Genesis, it is not until God causes a stream to “rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground”, that plant life can flourish, and only then that God forms humanity.

It's been suggested that Psalm 65 was written as a hymn of thanksgiving after a time of drought. The psalmist creates a beautiful image of God irrigating the earth: “You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water... You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.”

In sharp contrast to this image of gentle, life-giving water, the Gospel today shows its terrifying, destructive potential – and yet, even here, God has power over it. When Jesus wakes in the middle of a storm to find the disciples panicking, their lives (as we imagine) flashing before them, he rebukes the “raging waves” and restores calm, to the astonishment of the petrified disciples.

Like so many things in this life, water can be benevolent and life-giving, or terrifying and dangerous. Like everything in this life, God is in control if we but realise and allow it. Even when the storm rages around us, even when we think that God is sleeping, we can relax in this sure knowledge, and allow the grace of God, which flows through everything and irrigates the whole earth and sustains all life, to flow through our very being. ☺

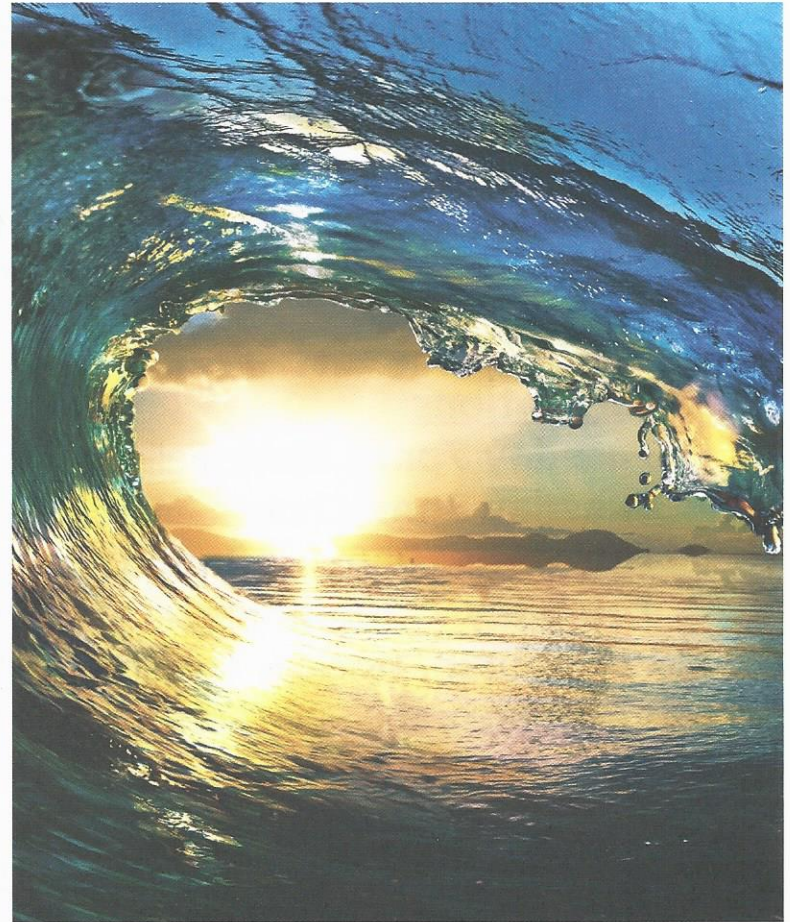
Oh Lord, you cradle us in your arms even amid the raging waves. Help us to know your presence in everything, and to trust in your awesome power. Amen.

Finding God on the smallholding beekeeping

by Jeni Parsons

I'm getting ready to keep bees and I'm quite scared. I've never been stung and I don't want to start now. I've joined the Pembrokeshire Beekeepers' Association and read books, done a course and helped

my neighbour handle his bees. All this learning but so little practical experience! I could say that, having studied it, I know what beekeeping is, but actually until I'm working with my own bees, trying to help them flourish as a hive community, be productive and survive the winter, I've not put my learning to the test. It's a bit like being a person of faith: until I've tried to live out my faith in daily life it, and I, haven't been tested. So I expect to find God in the daily business of tending the bees, noticing their ways, protecting them from predators and from starvation, rather than in all the books and classes. ☺



Apprenticeship Week

by Lucy Russell

Apprenticeships are jobs which allow trainees to earn while they learn. The mentor shares their wisdom with their apprentice, but ultimately the apprentice is responsible for their own growth. As in faith, learning from the master facilitates our growth as we make our own journey, but the responsibility ultimately rests with us.

This year sees the twelfth annual National Apprenticeship Week – a five-day celebration of apprenticeship success. Opportunities continue to grow for apprenticeships in all kinds of businesses, as well as in education, engineering and even trainee legal roles, making apprenticeships a viable alternative to university.

If you want to find out more about apprenticeships here's a good place to begin: www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide ☺

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Martin Luther King Jr

Church of Scotland: Orphir and Stenness Parish

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 7pm - 8pm: Fellowship. All welcome.

Tuesday 8pm: Choir

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

Thursday 7:30pm: Session Meeting in the kirk hall

Preliminary notice. The choir will lead a lifeboat service on Sunday 17th March, the anniversary of the Longhope lifeboat disaster. There will be a retiring collection in aid of the RNLI.

Readings: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, and 42-50
Luke 6:27-38;

Hymns: 132 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
197 As we are gathered
97 O God you search me and know me
519 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
522 The Church is wherever

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.