



EAGLE



The magazine of the Church of St John the Evangelist

Forfar

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“ So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. “

1 Corinthians Chapter 13, Verse 13



Communication

As well as our own website address for St John's www.stjohnsforfar.co.uk you can also find information at the following on-line resources:

Inspires Online <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/inspires/>

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Pisky.scot – <http://pisky.scot/> This provides the latest in thinking and discussion within the SEC. Previously Inspires Magazine offered a forum for information, discussion and debate. Now pisky.scot allows for that same conversation to be held more publicly and with the invitation to comment and get involved.

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From the Rector

By the time you are reading this we will have passed Candlemas – 2nd February and hopefully I will have spied a few carpets of snowdrops. One of their common names is Candlemas Bells. They are usually the first flower that we see in the New Year although winter aconites are often prolific too. But the snowdrop is probably the favourite. For many of us it means hope. It is the sign of new growth, new beginnings, and the promise of spring. This tiny plant flowers because of the cold and the dark – it needs the cold to be activated into flowering. And it lifts our spirits.



One of the earliest legends of the snowdrop is when the first winter was on the earth and Eve was pining for the beautiful flowers of the fields. An angel caught a flake of driving snow, breathed life into it and transformed it into a flower for her. It was said to break the spell of winter and, at the same time, offer divine mercy.

Snowdrops were gathered at Candlemas to decorate churches in this country before the reformation. They were symbols of purity, which was connected to the rite of purification that Mary observed by going to the temple forty days after Christmas. In pre-Christian times the 2nd February was known as the 'Feast of Lights' marking the midpoint of winter half way between the shortest day and the spring equinox.



Of course, we celebrate the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and contemplate the fulfilment of Simeon and Anna seeing the Christ child – the Light to the world. We no longer bless all the church candles that will be used in the church during the year, but it is a wonderful time of blessing for us. While we not unnaturally want to hurry winter along and let spring unfold it is also good for us to sit back and consider all that we have that is good. I, as

much as anyone want to feel the warmth of the sun again. However, despite the turbulence of these times I am sure we have all found little things to thank God for – a quiet piece of music, a comedy on the television, the boisterousness of the sparrows in the garden, the smile of a child. May you all find blessings at this time and thank God for them.

With love

Elaine

Hello, I'm a volunteer at 2 local rescues and a Hedgehog Champion with the British Hedgehog Preservation Society/Peoples' Trust for Endangered Species.

How long is it since you last saw a hedgehog? The UK has lost a third of its population since 2000, and their numbers are declining as fast as tigers in the wild. They are now officially classed as vulnerable to extinction in the IUCN's Red List for British Mammals. It's sad to think that, for future generations, this humble but useful little God's creature might only be a character in storybooks. Here are some simple tips to help them.

1. Link your garden with a Hedgehog Highway. Hedgehogs travel between 1-2 km a night searching for food and a mate. Leaving a small gap in your fence the size of a CD case will let hedgehogs through but be too small for pets. BHPT/PTES sell snazzy little recyclable Hedgehog Highway signs, for a few pounds. Ask your neighbours to do the same!
- 2 Create a wild corner in your garden so they can snuffle around for insects.
3. Tidy up netting and litter which can trap hedgehogs due to their spines. Even rubber bands dropped by the postie can become embedded in their skin, causing a slow, painful death.
4. Put out food and water. You can supplement their diet with wet dog or cat food (preferably not fish based). No bread, milk, mealworms or peanuts, which are all extremely bad for them. For those who are into simple DIY you can make a feeding station to stop other animals having a free supper - details on the BHPS website/YouTube
5. Stop using chemicals especially slug pellets. Hedgehogs are a gardener's best friend as they eat slugs as well as many other beasts which would otherwise be devouring your prize flowers and vegetables
6. Check before mowing or strimming. Hedgehogs often sleep in long grass or hedges during daytime and won't run away if they hear a mower, resulting in horrific injuries or death. Use gloves to move a single hog to safety. If there's a family, call the BHPS for advice on 01584 890801, the SSPCA on 0300 999 999 or Google to find your local Hedgehog Rescue.
7. Be careful with bonfires or simply burning leaves. Piles of debris are irresistible to a hedgehog looking for somewhere to hibernate or nest – build it on the day of burning to avoid a tragic end, or if you have to build it before then check carefully with a pole or broom, not a spade or fork. They are usually in the centre.
8. Make a home for hedgehogs. A log pile is one of the best features for encouraging all kinds of wildlife, and easy to make. It will encourage insects and provide nesting opportunities all year around. Alternatively, you can make your own hedgehog house – download instructions from the [BHPS website](#).



Memoires of a Wartime Evacuee—Chapter 7

I have mentioned the country rule that everyone contributes to the common good. On most days before school I would take Sophie up to her grazing. Of course she knew the routine but she just might have had a little bother with the latch of the gate. Her grazing was a very wide but overgrown harvest-wagon road, head-high to me with herbs and grass, that just ran through the fields. Sophy would be waiting at the gate for my return at four o'clock.

There was a grazing garth adjacent to the Jaques' place but it would be set aside for hay and winter fodder until June. Bobby went to 'Chapel Garth' along the lane. I would help with hay making and Miss Jaques provided a sort of lemonade made with 'Eiffel Tower' crystals in a Gordon's Dry Gin bottle (her joke). The lane ran steeply across the gateway and when I decided to climb onto the loaded cart on its way to the stable I was thrown several feet down onto the road as the cart rocked over. No bones broken, but sadder and wiser. When you do something silly the first thing you do is look around to see if anyone has noticed: no one had, apparently.

Wandering round the village one morning I turned into 'Bottom Barley's' yard and came upon four or five men wrestling with a pig. One of the men had a spike and another a mallet. I knew what they were about. I took myself off.

It was impossible to forget that there was a 'war on'. (A strange expression. It sounds like something you turn on and off like a tap.) On one occasion I listened to young men discussing the latest acquisition of the Home Guard. One said it was like tubes welded together: it was the Sten gun. The Sten apart, the popular TV comedy show 'Dad's Army', has tended to ridicule rather than inform. In fact a large number of very fit young men trained in the evenings after their day's work. These were people who were in reserved occupations such as : farming, munitions, engineering and so on. I had two colleagues in the Bell Street (Dundee) College who were engineering apprentices during the war but members of the Home Guard after work. They did 'live' training on Craigowl, including grenade training. You didn't want to be near a 'butter-fingers' in the half-dark and the pitch-black. Nearer the end of the war, other fit young men were drafted into the mines—Bevin Boys. It was a matter of balance. In modern war, numbers at 'the front' are useless if 'material' is neglected. Equally young women kept our food production alive in 'The Land Army'.* Surely without the efforts of our women –folk in almost all walks of life, we might well have lost the fight by hunger. The fighting folk are the top of a very large pyramid.

*The Land Army is said to have been 80,000 strong. See also the history of the ATA (Air Transport Auxiliary). Women flew aircraft, 'Lancs' to Spitfires, from factory to airfield without navigational aids. Many died in the hazards.



Gordon E M Miller

St Valentine

St. Valentine was born in Terni, Italy , in 226 AD. During his lifetime he was a priest who ministered to persecuted Christians and was himself martyred by Claudius II at the age of 42. St. Valentine is commemorated in the Anglican Communion on February 14th. The name “Valentine” is derived from the Latin “valens” which means worthy, strong or powerful.

According to his official biography, he was arrested and imprisoned while on a temporary visit to Rome. He was put under house arrest with a judge named Asterias, before whom he defended the Gospel and the resurrection. The judge brought his blind daughter to Valentine and said that if he could restore her sight, it would prove the truth of what he had been saying. Valentine prayed, and the girl’s sight was restored. The judge and all his household were convinced of the truth of the Gospel and were baptized.

He was later arrested for continuing to evangelize and brought before the Emperor Claudius II. Valentine refused to deny his faith and was executed outside the Flaminian gate on February 14th 269. It is said that before his execution, he wrote a note to Asterias’ daughter signed “from your Valentine”, which is said to have inspired the traditional romantic associations.

Another legend is that Valentine defied the order of the Emperor and secretly performed Christian Weddings. This allowed the husbands to avoid conscription into the army, which was a great nuisance to the Emperor. It is said that Valentine gave each new husband a heart out of paper, “to remind them of their vows and God’s love”.

His feast day became associated with romantic love by Geoffrey Chaucer in 14th Century England. During the middle ages it was noticed that birds paired in mid-February. This associated St. Valentine’s Day with love and devotion.

St. Valentine is the patron saint of lovers, epileptics and beekeepers .



The Ancient Greeks Six Words for love

Eros - sexual passion

Philia - deep friendship

Ludus - playful love

Agape - love for everyone

Pragma - longstanding love

Philautia - love of the self

The Five Languages of Love

Affection/ intimacy, words of affirmation, quality time, acts of service, giving/ receiving gifts.

(Ed.)

MAGAZINE

It has been agreed that there will be no increase in the cost of the contribution for the Eagle for 2022 it will remain at £5 for the year (10 copies). With the gradual relaxing of Covid restrictions we hope that more of the regular congregation will feel comfortable about coming to church on a Sunday and/or Wednesday in which case can I ask that you bring your envelope with you and put it in the collection – but don't forget to put your name on it so we know who has contributed. If you decide to post it back to Carol I urge you not to forget to put your name inside!

Thanking you for your assistance.

Roger

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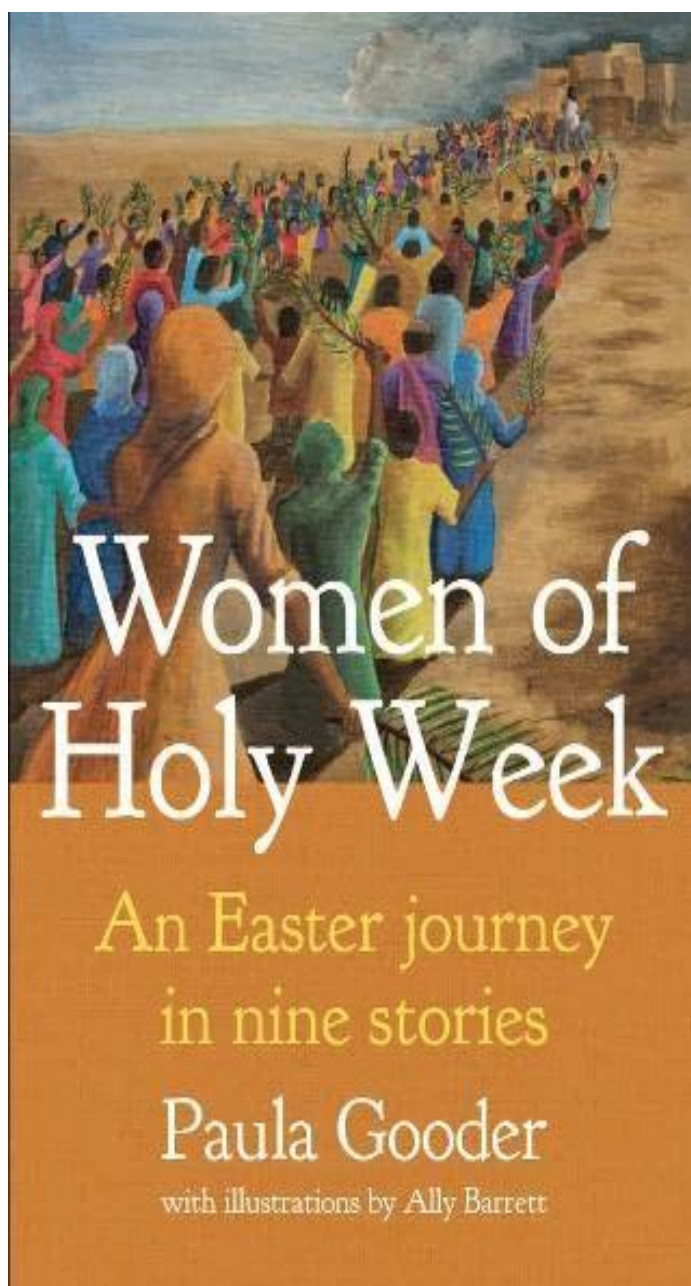
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FACT Lent Course 2022 - Stories for Lent



This course will use the book 'Women of Holy Week' by Paula Gooder. As the author writes, "When I imagined Jesus and his disciples, the early Church and the earliest followers, nearly everyone was a man. There was hardly a woman in sight...the Gospels and Epistles have what you might call a strongly male cast. There are not many roles for women. And yet they were there: sometimes named, sometimes not; sometimes speaking, often silent."

This is not a course specifically for women just as the Bible is not specifically for men. It is simply looking at some aspects of our faith through a different lens.

The book presents nine stories, and we will choose six of them to consider and use the suggested bible passages and supplementary questions.

This is a beautifully produced book and is available from

<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/books/9781781402894/women-of-holy-week> at £8.99 (plus p&p) or from

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Women-Holy-Week-Journey-Stories/dp/1781402892> priced £9.45.

The course will be held online and can be accessed through this Zoom [link](#). The sessions will be held on Thursdays: 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st March and 7th April 7-8pm. They will be led by two of Forfar's clergy Rev Elaine Garman and Rev David Wharton. Please contact the Rector by Sunday 20th February if you wish the Zoom link sent to you by email and/or if you want the book to be purchased for you.

Women And Climate

The Rev. Canon Terrie Robinson

In Barbara Kingsolver's novel *Poisonwood Bible*, a missionary travels overseas and settles in a village in 1950s Belgian Congo. To provide for his family's subsistence, the missionary creates a garden and begins planting seeds. A village woman observes him planting in flat beds of earth, and advises him to raise the soil in mounds. The missionary dismisses her advice.

Overnight, the village woman reshapes the garden, creating long piles of earth with channels separating them. The missionary responds by levelling the mounds of soil and replanting the seeds in flat ground. The seeds sprout and begin to grow, and are promptly washed away when the heavy rains come.

Dismissing the woman's indigenous wisdom was an arrogance and a mistake. It is certainly a mistake in these days of our climate crisis, to dismiss women's local and hard-earned experience, knowledge, and the competencies they have acquired out of necessity for mitigation and adaptation. It is also a serious omission when the specific needs of women and girls are not factored into national and international responses—and the churches' responses—to climate change.

The environmental impacts of climate change are not gender neutral. A growing body of evidence shows that women are disproportionately affected by climate change. To a great extent, this is because women make up the majority of the world's economically poor. In some areas, they do most of the agricultural work. Women often bear more responsibility for household food security, and carry the greater part of the burden for harvesting water and fuel for day to day survival. And more time spent on securing basic resources means less time to secure an education or earn an income.

The lack of assets that is characteristic of so many women globally puts them at a particular disadvantage. Following severe weather events and related disasters, they are usually at higher risk of being placed in unsafe, overcrowded shelters.

1 And bearing in mind the estimate that by 2050 there will be 250 million environmental refugees, it is likely that women will find it difficult to make the move and re-establish themselves and their families elsewhere. When changes in environmental conditions cause displacement or simply increase hardship, more girls than boys drop out of school to help with domestic chores or to save money, or may be forced into early marriage in order to transfer the "economic burden" they represent. **2** UN Women Watch has pointed out that in the context of cyclones, floods and other disasters that require mobility, cultural constraints on women's movements may hinder their timely escape, access to shelter or access to health care. **3** It is estimated, for example, that 90 per cent of the 138,000 people killed in the 1991 cyclone that hit Bangladesh were women and children. **4** In some areas of India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, up to 80 per cent of those killed by the 2004 tsunami were women. **5** But women aren't just victims of climate change; they are

also powerful agents of change. It is, therefore, gratifying to see that in its “Agreed Conclusions,” the recent session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women urges governments at all levels, and invites civil society—including faith-based organizations—to “develop and adopt gender-responsive strategies on mitigation and adaptation to climate change to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change, through, inter alia, the promotion of their health and well-being, as well as access to sustainable livelihoods, and the provision of adequate resources to ensure women’s full participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies and policies related to the adverse impacts of climate change, and ensuring the integration of their specific needs into humanitarian responses to natural disasters, into the planning, delivery and monitoring of disaster risk reduction policies and into sustainable natural resources management. ⁶ The great mistake of our kind has been to see our own flourishing as something separate from the flourishing of the planet we inhabit, with all its ecosystems, creatures and plants. Yet God’s handiwork is a tapestry of interwoven complexity. And that complexity means that every person, every woman and man, has something of great value to gain and to contribute as we respond to our ever more urgent calling to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The author is the Anglican Communion’s director for Women in Church and Society.

1 UN Women Watch, ‘Fact Sheet: Women, Gender Equality and Climate Change’, 2009, <http://bit.ly/2pG4orK>


2 Ian Davis et al, ‘Tsunami, Gender and Recovery’, 2005, <http://www.gdnonline.org/resources/tsunami-genderandrecovery.pdf>

3 UN Women Watch, 2009

4 Hanna Schmuck, Report from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2002

5 Oxfam Briefing Note, ‘The tsunami’s impact on women’, March 2005

6 <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018>



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Caring for God's Creation

Our readings for the last Sunday in January (fourth Sunday of Epiphany) ([1 Corinthians 13.1-13](#) [Luke 4. 21-30](#)) prompt us to think about our loving response and alternatively when we do not want to hear the Good News, the truth to what is being said. We often want to shut our ears to the radical changes to lifestyle that are required to heal Creation divorcing it from our practice of faith. But we cannot separate one from the other even when listening and acting are distressing. Have a look at the words below and if you can sing it to 'Immortal, invisible'.

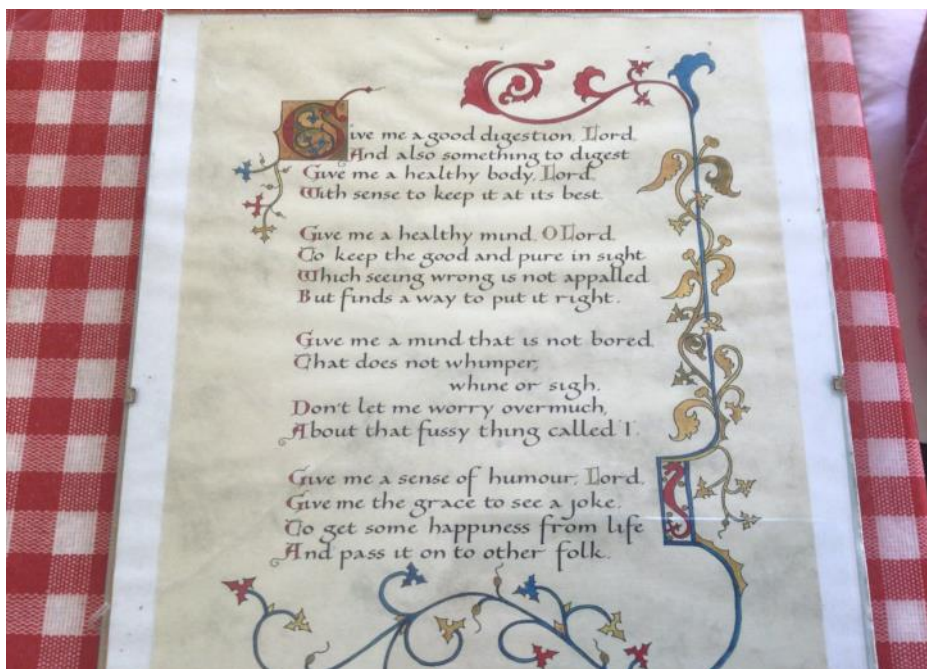
*You know it's Good News when it drives you to rage:
makes changes apparent; the End of the Age;
Love sounds like a message you'd like to ignore
and throw down on rocks from the cliff to the shore!*

*You've chosen to listen, but here's the surprise
that Jesus brings justice to light to your eyes:
says "healing is God's gift for here and for now
not stuck in the past, nor beyond far hills' brow".*

*And Good News from Jesus is Good News for all
the Earth and the enemy, monstrous and small;
with warnings to heed and delights to enjoy
inclusive and caring: it's bound to annoy!*

*In language of angels or slang of the street
Christ's friends will speak love to whomever they meet
And how you receive it speaks volumes aloud
But Good News that's welcomed gives cause to be proud.*

<https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/news/>



From Dorothy Bruce
- Gardyne.