

**St James the Less Penicuik and St Mungo West Linton**

**Scottish Episcopal Churches**

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28<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

**Rector's letter for August,**

July has sped past at a quick pace. I have finally shaken off the last of the COVID tiredness and I have managed to clear most of my email backlog. It helps that in July and August there is some more 'free time' in my week as there is a reduction in the number of scheduled activities and meetings.

It is also a time to look forward and start planning through to the end of the Christmas liturgical season, and to agreeing with Chris, Joy, Peter and Neville about their working agreements for the following year, so I know what they are able to contribute to the services and activities now being planned.

**Anglican Communion Lambeth Conference**

All of the Scottish Episcopal Church bishops are now in Canterbury, attending the Anglican Communion's Lambeth Conference, along with another 653 bishops from around the world. The Lambeth Conference is normally held every ten years and was due to be held in 2018, but was delayed whilst the Anglican Communion tried to find a formula that would allow all provinces to participate, as some were adamant that they would not attend whilst issues of human sexuality were still not resolved to their liking. The Conference was then further delayed for two years by COVID. Hence it is happening in 2022 rather than 2018.

For the past year 500 of the Anglican Communion bishops have been meeting online in groups of twenty, as part of their journey towards the conference,

building up relationships through prayer and dialogue. On arrival at Canterbury, many of the bishops have sought out others from their online groups before the formal start of the conference. It is openly acknowledged that across the Anglican Communion there is a diversity of theological views and perspectives, and with this in mind, the conference this year seeks to be a place for dialogue and understanding, not of debate. In my opinion it is unfortunate (to put it mildly) that the Primates of Uganda, Nigeria, and Rwanda issued a joint statement in May. The statement says that they planned not to attend Conference because the Anglican Communion had 'failed to address with remorse and repentance the issues that necessitated our absence' in 2008 (the last Lambeth Conference). This statement refers to the attendance in 2008 of at least one bishop who was in a same sex relationship. They went on to say in their statement that the Conference would be focussing on "peripheral matters" such as the environment, poverty, and economic disadvantage. From my perspective, I think the statement has it completely the wrong way around; the environment, poverty and economic disadvantage are certainly not peripheral matters.

Also, the Anglican Communion has never been like the Roman Catholic church where the Pope is head of the church, and where theology and praxis is decided at the centre and promulgated for implementation. The Anglican Communion is a mutual communion of independent provinces that look to the Archbishop of Canterbury to lead, but importantly the archbishop has no authority over each province.

If you wish to follow the experiences of the Scottish bishops, there will be a short daily report posted on the Provincial website [www.scotland.anglican.org](http://www.scotland.anglican.org) and on Facebook. The first few days will be a retreat. Then the bishops start a series of talks, presentations, and bible studies, and using a document with a number of statements in, each given a name as a draft 'Lambeth call', addressing what it means to be God's church in God's world'.

### **Contemplative Prayer at St Mungo's: Changing to Wednesday Lunchtime**

With effect from August the Contemplative Prayer sessions held at S Mungo's will move to being held on a Wednesday lunchtime at 12.30 pm. Although numbers attending have not been large, those who have attended have found this time to be an important aspect of their week. Many thanks to Ben Haynes for organising and leading these sessions. They are a time to be still and come into the presence of God, using some different styles, such as centring prayer, Christian meditation following the World Community of Christian Meditation

model of John Main, and Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. It would be lovely to see you, so you can experience the richness of this form of Christian prayer too.

### **St James' Day Walk**

25<sup>th</sup> July is St James' Day and an excuse to arrange a walk, even if not on el camino. It is thought James' ministry travels took him to the Iberian peninsula at some stage. He was beheaded by Herod Agrippa in 44 AD. Legend has it that his body was taken by boat to the Atlantic coast of Spain and then up one of the rivers inland, to be buried in a field near what became the city of Santiago de Compostela (Santiago of the Field of Stars). When the boat was pulled out of the water, it was said to have been covered in scallop shells, and this became his emblem.

After last year's St James' Day walk on the flat, this year I decided on a slightly hillier walk to commemorate St James. On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, some of the folk who walked to Santiago with me in May joined with some people from both St Mungo's and St James the Less, to walk from West Linton to the Covenanter's Grave up on the moorland. The weather was kind to us, and the twelve-mile walk was a good opportunity to catch up and have some great conversations. I took my sister's dog, Lopy, a large greyhound for most of the walk, but he did protest on the way back down at the distance covered and insisted on a five-minute rest at the ten-mile point, before reluctantly and slowly walking the last two miles back.

Several people suggested we don't wait until St James' Day 2023 to have another walk. If you are interested in joining in with a walk or would be happy to devise and lead a group on a walk, please let me know.

### **Faith Development**

We hold our weekly Bible study at 2pm on a Tuesday afternoon, online. We resume after our summer break on 6<sup>th</sup> September to start a study of the Book of Joshua. Why don't you join us to explore the texts, understand their context, and just as importantly, explore how they speak to us and how they inform us today? We enjoy exploring our different understandings and learn from each other.

### **Monday Study Night: The Eucharist**

Commencing on 5<sup>th</sup> September at 7 pm, online, we shall be exploring the Eucharist, using the Pilgrim course booklets. You don't need to have the course booklet to join us, but most people like to have a copy. If you wish to join us for this discussion, please let me know, preferably before 4<sup>th</sup> August, so I can

place an order for the course booklets. The course booklets cost in the region of £5.50. You can download an epub version of the booklet if you don't want a booklet cluttering up your bookcase, and it is cheaper. (search for Pilgrim Course 'The Eucharist' on the Church House Publishing shop website <https://chbookshop.hymnsam.co.uk/> ).

### **Faith Development 'Faith Books'**

When we have a fifth Monday in the month, I lead a discussion at 7.00 pm about a book as a way of introducing people to different authors which may pique an interest to read more of their work (or not!).

✝ The next 5<sup>th</sup> Monday is on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022. The book to be discussed is **'In The Shelter: Finding a Home in the World', by Padraig O' Tuama.** The final book for 2022 is listed below. That should leave plenty of time to get the books or borrow them from someone (including me) or from a library.

✝ Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022: 'Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi', by Ami-Jill Levine.

In looking for new or used books, I have often used [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com) I am sure there are other search sites that will help people find the above books.

I have just finished reading the Ami-Jill Levine book, well in advance of our discussion in October. It is an interesting read, as it explores parables from a Jewish context, and provides some different approaches and understanding of the parables. I am happy to lend my copy out now if anyone wants to borrow it.

### **Mid-week Services on Zoom**

Our services on a Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm follow the regular pattern of services set out below. They are all on Zoom. They will not run in July and August, returning on 7<sup>th</sup> September.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Wed of the month: Healing service (if you wish someone or a situation to be prayed for send an email to me or Marion Mather)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed of the month: Christian Meditation (a time to settle, a short line of scripture, 15 minutes of silence, and a closing prayer).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed of the month: Iona Abbey evening service liturgy
- 4<sup>th</sup> Wed of the month: service in the style of Taizé

At 9pm every Wednesday evening we hold the service of Compline. Please do join us for this short service of calm and settling prayers before sleep. This service will continue over the summer months, without a break.

### **Continuing our Mission: Leading Your Church Into Growth Prayer**

Each weekday morning, we pray for growth in our church. If you are not able to join us online for Morning Prayer at 9 am, can I encourage you to pray this once a day. The prayer is given below.

God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,  
send your Holy Spirit to give:  
vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow:  
in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you, and in service to our local  
community, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Morning and Evening Prayer**

We meet online Monday to Friday at 9.00 am and at 5.30 pm. A while ago someone asked me where we access the Daily Offices liturgy. If you wish to access it, go to the Provincial Website, [www.scotland.anglican.org](http://www.scotland.anglican.org) and place your cursor on the 'Spirituality' heading. A submenu appears and you can select the appropriate Daily Office from the right-hand side of the page.

### **In Touch Magazine for St James the Less and St Mungo's**

The deadline for content to be submitted for the next issue is 7th August 2022. I would like to encourage you to submit something for inclusion in the magazine, a poem, a review of a book or a film, an article on a subject of interest? I am led to believe this next issue will include at least one photo of me on el camino Inglés... If you wish to submit an article, please send them to [intouch@stjamesthelesspenicuik.org](mailto:intouch@stjamesthelesspenicuik.org)

### **Financial giving to St James the Less or to St Mungo's**

If you are able, can I ask you to prayerfully consider setting up a recurring monthly payment to the church via on-line banking, to contribute financially on a regular basis. Details of the bank accounts are given below for each of the churches.

#### **St James the Less:**

Monthly donation by bank transfer (include your name in the reference line when setting this up – only the Treasurer knows the name of the donor). Bank

details are: St James Episcopal Church Penicuik, acct no 17117264, sort code 80-22-60.

### **St Mungo:**

Monthly donation by bank transfer (include your name in the reference line when setting this up – only the Treasurer knows the name of the donor). Bank details are: St Mungo's Vestry, acct no 00817851, sort code 80-09-39.

### **Regular Weekday Services**

Morning and Evening Prayer and the Wednesday evening services are online using Zoom. Sharing the Daily Offices each weekday with others is a wonderful way of connecting, praying, and praising together with a natural rhythm of the week. It is also one of the few times we can hear the psalms being read more than just a few verses at a time. Please do consider joining us at 9 am and or 5.30 pm for about half an hour, whenever you are able.

### **Ecumenical Relations and Community Involvement Work**

The Penicuik Ministers continue to meet every month. We are now meeting face to face once again in the Storehouse for a chat, and normally a large, tasty scone and coffee. Revd Dr Tony Foley (Church of Scotland West Tweeddale churches) and I have met up a few times to discuss shared services and activities in West Linton.

Once a month the Penicuik Churches Together (PCT) has a joint Sunday evening service. On that Sunday our usual schedule will be adapted so that members can attend the PCT service. St James' hosted the PCT service on 26<sup>th</sup> June, at 7.00 pm.

The EH26 Resilience Group continues to meet occasionally. It remains a good way to connect in with the needs of our community and support how those needs are met. I am also still attending the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership 'Care for People Planning Group' Zoom meetings, and both the Afghan Resettlement Programme meetings and Ukrainian Refugee scheme meetings.

I have attend the West Linton and District Sustainable Group and the discussions are always worthwhile, and it is good to see so many people in the area concerned about the environment and the climate emergency.

### **The Ministry Team**

We continue to meet on a monthly basis to plan for the coming months; planning services and faith development activities as well as exploring other aspects of what is offered to the congregations and to our local communities.

## In Other News...

I had a lot of raspberries to harvest last week, but the dry weather meant they were not very plump. Perhaps I should have been out watering them more often? They still tasted good with my breakfast cereal and with fromage frais in the evening. I got to my blackcurrant bushes somewhat later, and the local bird population had done an excellent job of eating most of them. My blueberry bushes were only planted late last year and yet I have had a reasonable crop from them, and very tasty they were too. I need to pick my ripe gooseberries in the next few days otherwise I suspect the birds will have another feast. I think I will make some jam rather than freezing them.

My broad beans are growing well, and some have been harvested and eaten, along with some of my mangetout and peas. The rain in the last few days seems to have made a difference to my apples, they are starting to swell. The plum tree also looks to have a decent crop.

I have been crawling around on my lawn on my hands and knees this last week or so. This is all in the name of pegging down a wire around my lawn to act as a perimeter guide for a new robot lawnmower I bought recently. I should finish laying the wire before this weekend is out, then I can hopefully watch the robot lawnmower wandering around the lawn and save me at least 90 minutes and quite often two hours a week cutting the grass. I will give you an update next month.

My elder daughter and her husband return from Vancouver on 29<sup>th</sup> July and will look after the Rectory whilst I am away on holiday from 6<sup>th</sup> August, on Iona. I shall be staying in the Abbey for Community Week followed by a week staying on as 'member in residence' (MIR). The MIR is asked to be available for guests to the Abbey who may want to ask about the Iona Community, to also be available to staff and volunteers working in the Abbey, and to lead a few services during the week and help out with the weekly Island pilgrimage that takes place every Tuesday. So, not a very hard week, with the joy and privilege of celebrating communion in Iona Abbey from the marvellous marble altar and leading some other services (but not having to preach). The hardest decision before I head to Iona is what books from my extensive 'books to read' pile I should take with me. I will let you know what I took with me next month.

Blessings

Nick Bowry

## Zoom-based Services

We have a regular pattern of services. Details of these are set out below. You can access them by computer, table or smart phone, as well as by phoning in from your house phone to the numbers given below.

### ***Morning Prayer at 9 am, and Evening Prayer at 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday.***

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/6289561588?pwd=aGtNeE1ZM3l1TkIuckp3bVJtZkRHQT09>

Meeting ID: 628 956 1588

Password: 040775

One tap mobile

+442034815240,,6289561588#,,#,040775# United Kingdom

+442080806591,,6289561588#,,#,040775# United Kingdom

### ***St Mungo, Holy Communion at 10.30 am on Sunday.***

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93417190423?pwd=K1ZoS0xKUWpRVENGTzFYl3NvakFHQT09>

Meeting ID: 934 1719 0423

Passcode: 062021

One tap mobile

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### ***St James the Less, Holy Communion at 10.30 am on Sunday.***

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92002197798?pwd=REp5NHQwVEEdSd3A4a09lN1HOUnUT09>

Meeting ID: 920 0219 7798 Password: 040775

One tap mobile

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+442034815237,,92002197798#,,#,040775# United Kingdom

### ***Wednesday Evening Services at 7.30 pm (not July or August)***

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96303841875?pwd=YmZiYkdNNzZJeWl5cmtZL2RLUWc1Zz09>

Meeting ID: 963 0384 1875 Password: 040775

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### **Wednesday Evening Compline at 9 pm (all year)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95345457224?pwd=TDNoT20vR2dYMVQ5STdsS0lzR0dMQT09>

Meeting ID: 953 4545 7224 Password: 040775

One tap mobile

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+443300885830,,95345457224#,,1#,040775# United Kingdom

## **Groups**

Church life continues in a variety of forms online. Several groups and sessions have been set up. Details of the existing groups and sessions being run are given below.

### **'Monday Evening Studies' at 7.00 pm**

This is a series of studies and discussions, open to all who wish to join us, including anyone you wish to invite – they don't have to be a member of St James the Less or St Mungo's. We take a break in July and August.

All of these sessions will use the following link.

Topic: Monday Evening Studies

<https://zoom.us/j/97670406222?pwd=WWUzL0dLNHdWdFJOYVNmLzdVY2w2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 976 7040 6222 Passcode: 202101

One tap mobile

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+442080806591,,97670406222#,,,,,0#,,202101# United Kingdom

### **5<sup>th</sup> Monday Evenings at 7.00 pm**

#### **'Faith Books'**

When we have a fifth Monday there will be a discussion about a book of Nick's choice, in a series called 'Faith Books'. The next 5<sup>th</sup> Monday is on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022, when we shall discuss 'In The Shelter: Finding a Home in the World', by Padraig O' Tuama. The list for the remainder of 2022 is:

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022: 'Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi', by Ami-Jill Levine.

If people wish to read these books but don't wish to buy them, I am happy to lend them out. Get in contact with me if you wish to borrow a book.

These sessions are suitable for people at any stage of their faith journey; from those enquiring to those with many years in the faith.

## **Weekly Bible Study**

### ***Tuesdays at 2pm***

This is a chance to discover and explore the Bible through reflection and discussion. Join us whenever you can. We shall be studying the Book of Joshua starting on 6<sup>th</sup> September. Why don't you join us to explore the texts, understand their context, and just as importantly, explore how they speak to us and how they inform us today.

<https://zoom.us/j/92510962481?pwd=L1hsaCtiWTh0ZFFib3N0WlluaVlaUT09>

Meeting ID: 925 1096 2481

Password: 040775

## **St Mungo's House Group**

### ***Thursdays at 7.30 pm***

Contact Markie Woodfield for further information.

## **Monthly Book Group**

### ***The fourth Monday of each month at 2 pm***

Contact Angela Sibley for further information.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/669139189?pwd=amlpZU1JeGFDWWR3VGpaWStvdTVvQT09>

Meeting ID: 669 139 189 Passcode: 040775