



# St Columba's Bathgate and St Peter's Linlithgow



Rector: Rev Christine Barclay Curate: Rev Peter Woodifield

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Pentecost 4

**D**EAR FRIENDS, as we journey through Ordinary Time, although there is nothing 'ordinary' as far as God is concerned, I hope these readings, prayers and reflections on the fourth Sunday after Pentecost make a connection with you and fill you with hope and encouragement.

### Collect

**O**LORD, in your mercy hear our prayers: and as you give us the desire to pray, grant us your help and protection; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

### Readings

Job 38: 1-11  
2 Corinthians 6: 1-13  
Mark 4: 35-41

### Reflection

**T**HE STORMS OF LIFE. We've all experienced them in one form or another. COVID for starters and everything related to that – let alone those that recur time after time. The loss of a loved one, a broken relationship, physical accidents, a major illness, redundancy, homelessness – the list is almost endless. In our Gospel reading we read of a major storm that left experienced fishermen convinced they were going to drown. We don't know why Jesus was so keen to get to the 'other side' of the lake that he and his disciples had to sail overnight. What we do know is that Jesus spent much of his life going to the 'other side', mixing with people the religious authorities wanted nothing to do with.

Crossing the lake is a metaphor for whichever version of the insider/outsider divide you prefer. And most of the time his disciples, who were themselves outsiders, went willingly with him. What's

particularly interesting about Mark's version compared with Matthew and Luke is that when the storm erupts Mark has the disciples saying – don't you care that we are about to die? – while the other two have them ask Jesus whether he was aware that they were about to die – a big difference. Mark's version cuts to the chase, doesn't it? Deep down we worry about whether God really does care for us individually. The answer is of course yes, but we don't always feel so sure of that when we run into one of life's storms, do we?

So what is Mark saying here? Quite clearly, I think, that Jesus can be directly equated to the God of Israel. That when the disciples are in the presence of Jesus they are in the presence of God. No wonder they are still afraid after Jesus calms the waters and say to each other – Just who is this guy? Fear is at the heart of much of this passage. Faith might be described as trusting and trusting in God should help us overcome our fear. But life isn't always like that. When we're afraid to the extent that we're almost paralysed, trusting tends to go out of the window. 'Teacher don't you care?' is a fear-induced question. Yet there is some really good news in this passage. This passage tells us that our deliverance from the storms of life does not depend on the extent of our faith. God is there caring for us even when out of fear we accuse him of not caring. For most of us, that is very good news indeed.

Once the storm is over and the disciples are soaked to the skin, what must they have been

thinking? Let me suggest some of the thoughts going through their minds. How could we have forgotten the nets breaking when he told us where to lower the nets, or the healings, or when he told the dead man to get up and walk? How about us – do we also suffer from spiritual amnesia? Do we forget those moments when we have had an intense experience of God, those times when we have had a sense of presence, those



glimpses of the true glory of creation? Does the humdrum of everyday life numb us to the glory and greatness of God?

But what if Jesus is the storm bringer as well as the storm calmer? I want to explore for a moment what happens when Jesus and the disciples get to the other side of the lake. The locals knew all about Legion. He was an outcast, he was possessed, he was

a self-harmer, let's stay away as far away as we can and get on with our lives. But then Jesus turns up and suddenly they see this unmanageable man sitting calmly with Jesus, the storm stilled as it were. But what was the cost of stilling the storm? Another – Jesus-created – enormous storm. Mark tells us there were 2,000 pigs in the herd. Let's assume for the moment that these pigs were the same size of the typical Scottish pig currently being bred for the supermarket shelf. Calculations I made suggest that you could be talking about anything up to £1 million worth of pork. That's a lot of livelihood over the cliff for the pig farmers. That's financial security out of the window. That's a serious storm – all for the sake of one man. No wonder they asked Jesus to leave.

If Jesus does bring a storm into our lives, we have a choice – we can either ask him to leave and let us get on with our comfortable lives or we can ask him to help us endure the storm and the changes of heart and mind that it demands. His storms challenge our forgetfulness about how big and mighty God truly is, they jolt us out of what can be a complacent existence. But while storms can be scary they can also be invigorating and transforming. The question we would do well to ask ourselves is whether we are willing to let Jesus bring it on.

*Rev Peter*

### Prayers

**H**ELP US LORD GOD always to remember that Jesus is with always us in all the storms of life however abandoned we may feel; give us the willingness to let trust win over fear



We pray for all those businesses affected by the latest delay in opening up society, for all the plans that have to be torn up and rewritten yet again. We pray for an even faster rollout of the vaccination programme so that this latest setback can be kept to an absolute minimum. We continue to pray for students and their end of year assessments and pray that the outcomes will be fairer than last year.



While we welcome the G7 decision to donate 1 billion vaccine doses to poorer countries, we pray for even greater generosity on the part of those who can afford towards those countries that cannot afford to protect their people. We pray against poverty, violence and injustice wherever it occurs.

We pray for the Church worldwide in

this Easter season especially those who are persecuted for their faith. For our Scottish Episcopal Church, for our College of Bishops, in particular Mark our Primus, John our Bishop, and for all who lead and guide us. We pray for Christine as she continues to enjoy her well-deserved holiday. May she return restored and renewed in Your Spirit.

We pray for Rev Ruth Innes and those from our church families who have asked for our prayers, remembering particularly Young Harry who is due to have his rescheduled operation on June 24.

**From St Columba's:** Katrina Barron, Rose MacLaren, Anne MacMillan, Brian Knotts, Howard Spencer, Lorna Aitken, Kath Stutt, Anthea & Katie McAlpin, Geoffrey Gerrard, Doug and Pat Laurie, Young Harry, Paul & Janice Moffat.

**And from St Peter's:** Anna Lovelock, Kathleen Rae (Anne's friend), Cisley Moss, Michael Patrick (Ruthie's friend), Peter McOwan, Harry and Connie Payne, Rita Manion (David's mother), Annie and Andy Gibbs (Olivia's in-laws), Joe Lavery, Bob Philip (Andy's father), Dot Pringle, Brenda Cook, Father John, Ruthie Cadell, David Szkudlarek, Jan Robson, Corinne Anderson and Jim O'Neil a friend of Lyn and John Aitken); and for all their families. We pray for the souls of those who have died in recent days and for all who mourn, and we remember those connected with our church families whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

**From St Columba's:** Andrew Mains, Iris Wicks, Olive Higgs, Ethel Shearer and Alexis Peat.

**From St Peter's:** Fred Harvey, Mary Mickel, George Henry and Mildred Walpole.

### Blessing

**T**HE PEACE OF GOD, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.



*Rev Peter*

## Notices

Dear Friends, and so we move further into summer and the school holidays approach at increasing speed. As we get used to singing (shortened) hymns again, we wonder what will be the next part of our traditional Sundays we will be free to enjoy again – whatever it is, it now looks likely that it will be pushed back a few weeks so we must continue to show patience. And because space is limited in St Peter's please book your seat – everyone is welcome to request a seat, whether a family group or otherwise, so book with Jane 843176 as soon as possible if you would like to attend a Sunday service.

Services for the coming week:

Fourth **Sunday** after Pentecost St Peter's @ 9.30am (Zoomed live)

St Columba's @ 11.15am.

**Tuesday** 22<sup>nd</sup> June: St Peter's Eucharist @ 10.30am.

**Wednesday** 23<sup>rd</sup> June: St Columba's Reserved Sacrament Worship Eucharist @ 10.30 led by David Graham-Service.

Rev Christine will be returning from holiday on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June for St Peter's Patronal Festival. Rev Peter (07747023108) and our two wardens (Jane, for the first week only 07982252666) and David (07901947345) will be looking after the day to day of church life. Please let us know of any urgent pastoral issues.

The third of Rev Peter's Parables studies will be on Zoom this coming Friday (June 25<sup>th</sup>) at 3pm. All are welcome. The Meeting ID is 834 1022 6022 Passcode: 420408. The one-click link is in the weekly Zoom list.

Mark and Sue Strudwick are opening their garden on Saturday June 26 to raise funds for St John's Eye Hospital in Jerusalem, Gaza and Hebron. Let's hope the weather stays fine to encourage people to go along and support this excellent cause.

The latest edition of The Communicant (the Edinburgh diocesan newsheet) is available now on the Diocesan website, via this link: <https://edinburgh.anglican.org/publications/the-communicant/>.

Nothing can stop the Provincial Youth Week! Glen 21 has now been confirmed for 1-7 August. It will be a 'blended' week of online interactivity, offline things to do and some in-person meet-ups in regional hubs around the Province. Places are filling up fast! Booking is still open, so if there are teenagers connected to your church who need something to look forward to this summer, direct them to Glen21.online for full information, FAQs and booking details. If you have any questions about Glen 21 please feel free to email Claire at YouthandChildren@dioceseofedinburgh.org. Claire Benton-Evans.

Rev Peter

Any contributions for the **Summer Edition of Life Together** to Peter Lewis (petethepod@gmail.com) by Sunday please.

### **SEC Morning, Evening and Night Prayer Liturgies**

Morning, Evening and Night Prayer liturgies are available at [www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices](http://www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices)

Rev Christine and Rev Peter will be saying Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer each day in their own homes and invite you to join in from yours.

On Thursday mornings at 9am they will be sharing a virtual service via Zoom. If you would like to join in, the link every week will be:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/756114372?pwd=ZXpMWndaY210empVY1daL09paGlvZz09>

Meeting ID: 991 1810 8400 Passcode: 143983

For the coming week beginning on Pentecost 4 (Trinity 3). On Monday we celebrate Fillan, Abbot, c.750, on Tuesday we celebrate Alban, Martyr, c.303, on Thursday we celebrate The Birth of John the Baptist, on Friday we celebrate Moluag of Lismore, Bishop, 592 and on Saturday we celebrate Robert Leighton, Bishop, 1684.

Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup>	1 Samuel 24:1-17	Romans 11:25-36	Luke 14:12-24
Monday 21 <sup>st</sup>	1 Samuel 5:1-12	Acts 5:12-26	Luke 21:29-36
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	1 Samuel 6:1-16	Acts 5:27-42	Luke 21:37 - 22:13
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	1 Samuel 7:2-17	Acts 6:1-15	Luke 22:14-23
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup>	1 Samuel 8:1-22	Acts 6:15 - 7:16	Luke 22:24-30
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup>	1 Samuel 9:1-14	Acts 7:17-29	Luke 22:31-38
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup>	1 Samuel 9:15 - 10:1	Acts 7:30-43	Luke 22:39-51



**The Collect for the week Proper 12, Sunday between 19 and 25 June (Except Thursday)**

O Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers: and as you give us the desire to pray, grant us your help and protection; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

**Each day we pray for:**

- The world: people, governments and leaders of the countries and specific issues arising in the news. Issues relating to social justice, peace, suffering and creation. And of course at this time for the devastating global covid-19 crisis.
- Our wider church, the SEC, our diocese, individual churches.
- Our community – residents in our area. For those with no faith, we pray for their introduction to the Christian faith, and for those with faith, that their faith may develop further.
- Those known to us who are unwell or in need.
- Our own church communities.



**Clergy contact numbers:**

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Rev Peter Woodfield – 07747023108

**Rector's Wardens contact numbers:**

David Graham Service – 07901947345  
Jane Ramsay - 07982252666