



St Martin of Tours

Diocese of Edinburgh Scottish Charity No: 011137

Living our faith in our community
through prayer, reflection and action



June July 2021

Trinity

St Martin of Tours Episcopal Church

is part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion

www.stmartinsedinburgh.org.uk

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Reflection shared on 9th May 2021 Ken Webb

Loving one another

Elections tend to divide. The results that came out of the election yesterday showed us that though the SNP have had massive support, the nation is still divided on the key constitutional question of independence.

Within any congregation there are likely to be a variety of views as to what is the best way forward for us as a Scottish nation.

The politician that we can't stand, or whose policies we strongly disagree with may be another's favourite.

But to bring it down to a more mundane level, the differences between us as individuals, each with our own particular personality, mean that we may well find it easier to love some than others.

Jesus sets the bar high for us. "Love one another as I have loved you, No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13)

I often have doubts about whether or not, if push comes to shove, I would be able to do that. May be for friends and family. But strangers?

I am encouraged by lots of examples recently of those who have risked their lives to save others, and some have lost their lives as a result, "in the Line of Duty!", to use the title of a popular TV drama series. But I'm thinking of nurses, doctors and care workers who have contracted COVID and died as a result of being exposed to the virus without adequate protection being in place, for example. Or the two members of the public who managed to hold down Usman Khan, the terrorist who had just killed Jack Merritt and Saskia Jones in the London Bridge Fishmonger's Hall attack.

So, human beings do seem to have something deep within them that can rise to the surface in an emergency or at difficult times. And that is, I believe, the love of God.

During the recent election debates I have been impressed by the respect that most politicians have shown each other, despite major differences of opinion. Nicola Sturgeon, for example, when she won her seat and defeated Anas Sarwar in her constituency, said of him that she actually liked him and respected him.

But, when it comes to politics and personality differences, it seems to be harder to love those with whom you clash. So, loving one another, as Jesus commands us to, is no easy matter, especially loving one another as Jesus has loved us with all our faults and foibles, leave alone the ways we may have wronged each other.

Yet, the epistle reading makes it clear that loving one another as Jesus has loved us is not meant to be burdensome (1 John 5:3). What are some of the keys to loving one another?

The first thing to realise is that the fact we disagree about politics, or theology or any other matter, does not mean we can't love each other.

Earlier, when questioned as to what was the most important commandment, Jesus had answered: that the most important was to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. And the second was to love one's neighbour as one's self (Mark 12:29-30). This is normally interpreted to mean love your neighbour in the same way that you love yourself; that is to care for your neighbour as you care for yourself. That may well be so. But what if there is a deeper meaning here?

The second most important commandment does not ask us to love our neighbour as well as we love our selves, but as ourselves. What makes it possible to love our neighbour (and remember how Jesus defined who our neighbour is in his parable of the Good Samaritan) is to see them not as another separate human being, different from ourself, but to see them as yourself. It takes a non-dualistic world view to see your neighbour as yourself. We are all interconnected and in that one great reality that we call God, from whom we all originated, and there is a spark of the divine in all of us, however deeply hidden it may be.

I was listening to last Sunday's podcast of the service from St James, Leith. Marie Louise, who works for the Scottish Story Telling Centre in normal times, was sharing the reflection. She referred to a book she was reading by Jonathan Haidt, 'The Righteous Mind: why good people are divided by politics and religion'. He points out that the actual reasons why we make judgements and react negatively to others are not rational, but often instinctive. We make them in a fraction of a second and then justify it. Though we think we are making rational judgements about others, in reality we are making judgements based on our understanding of the world, our prejudices, our cultural upbringing, and the needs of our personality. So, Our instinctive reaction is very much about fear. Each ego personality is fear based, and it is based on the perception of separateness. And that is often unconscious.

The teacher in an online course Marie Louise was taking suggested something that I thought was so practical. When confronted with someone whom you instinctively don't like or with whose opinions or policies you strongly disagree try and find something in that person that you can like, find something that you do agree with, find some humanity in them that will enable you to love them, so that you don't have these reactions.

That is, to my mind, one example of what it means to love your neighbour as yourself.

Another way to love those with whom we have clashes of opinion or personality has to do with the **Law of Three** that I was talking about last time I shared a reflection. You remember, that for any new thing to come into being, three forces independent and intertwining forces are needed, an active force, a resistant force and a reconciling force. So it is important and helpful to realise that we need those with whom we disagree or who resist what we are desiring in order in order to find that all important third force without which there is no progression. What arises out of that is something new in a different dimension. The third force is often something surprising, some new insight, a way of seeing the problem from a new perspective. I will be touching on this more when it comes to Trinity Sunday. But it helps to have some practical examples.

My first example is taken from the same passage in the gospels when Jesus is answering questions set by the authorities to trick him. These are always set out as a binary choice, an either or choice. For example, the question he was asked about whether or not it was permitted by the law (by which they mean religious law) to pay taxes to Caesar (Mark 12:13-17). So he asks them to show him a Roman coin and asks whose image was on the coin. He concludes, "Then give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." And what he meant by that is not just to separate civic matters from religious matters, as was suggested by one contributor to a radio programme I was listening to discussing the role of religion in the question of Scottish independence. That answer opens up a new possibility, but I will leave you to ponder on that.

My second example is the true story told by Cynthia Bourgeault of a lady who was having, along with a number of others, set out her case for funding. As the director of a small government-subsidized service agency, she had to appear before a local government board each spring to orally defend her budget and make her request for the next year's funds.

As she waited her turn in a seemingly endless litany of petitions from the heads of other agencies, she pictured the situation according to the Law of Three. First force was clearly held by the presenters, with their legitimate need and desperation for funding. Holy denying was quite literally held by the board, which seemed of a mind to throw out a certain number of requests altogether and substantially trim back the rest. She realised that in this configuration the two opposing forces were colliding on an energetic ground of scarcity—the assumption that there was not enough to go around. There was no third force. Could she do anything to create it?

Suddenly an inspiration arrived. She threw away her prepared speech, smiled warmly, and began, "I want to thank you all for the generous funding we received from you last year. Here's how we spent it." She then went on to detail all the good work they had managed to accomplish on what was actually a very small grant. As she spoke, she could sense the board members visibly relaxing and her colleagues staring in amazement. She concluded, "We are not asking you for a single additional penny this year, and if we need to cut back, this is the strategy we've put in place to do so with minimal impact on our service."

"It almost goes without saying that she received the full amount requested. By introducing gratitude as the missing third force, she managed to shift the energetic field from a sense of scarcity to a sense of abundance. And from that field of abundance she did indeed receive her daily bread."¹

Political decisions are usually set out as a binary choice. What if there is another way of seeing the problem, not a binary, but a ternary way. This is not just both and, nor is it merely a compromise, but an entirely new way. And to get there you need not just a different attitude towards the other but a new way of perceiving the other person and what the nature of the problem is. In particular, you need to see that the negative force, the resisting force is actually needed, for anything to move forward.

This new way of perceiving reality comes through the gift of the Holy Spirit. In fact it was that which changed Peter from being a narrow minded person requiring people to become Jewish before being admitted to the community of Faith. And we need that too. We look forward to Pentecost, next Sunday.

And, I would suggest, we cannot love others as Jesus has loved us unless, like him, we are deeply aware of how we are loved, as Jesus was in touch with his heavenly father's love.

I conclude by sharing this beautiful song written by members of the St James, Leith, music group. You can listen to it by going to their website and you will find a link to it on their music page at the bottom <https://www.stjamesleith.org.uk/music>

Song: Tying to Love You

We don't always get along, and always think the same:

Sometimes we hold different views, and do so in God's name.

Just because I hold my view with certainty right now,

It doesn't mean I won't learn more and change my thinking round.

So when we say with all our hearts.

"I feel that this is true",

I know that God loves both of us

And I'm trying to love you.

Even though your thoughts and mine are just like night and day

And even though we see the world in quite a different way

Just because I hold my view with certainty right now,

it doesn't mean that you and I can't share the love we've found.

(Chorus)

Sometimes when I think of you, our differences create

a barrier that separates and leads us into hate.

Just because I hold my view with certainty right now,

in time we'll both break through the wall, and see our common ground.

(Chorus)

Ken Webb

We have been most fortunate to have Ken Webb with us at St Martins for the last 18 months. He has inspired us with his Reflections, helped us through the Covid Pandemic with the zoom services and then welcomed us back into Church safely. He allowed us to have a feeling of peace and fellowship again. He encouraged us to find our congregational strength again. We wish him and Carol a very happy retirement and hope he will come back and visit us.

Message from Eileen Thompson

Dear St Martin's family,

Warm good wishes as you prepare for the coming of your new priest. I am looking forward to journeying with you over these next three to four months and to getting to know you. My first Sunday with you is 20th June but from now on I am here for you and contactable on 0131 315 4928 or eilenthompson@gmail.com. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you need anything.

You might like to know a bit about me. I came to Scotland to study theology at New College and it has been my home base ever since. However I have another home in India where I was ordained presbyter in the Church of South India. I've served in a variety of churches and Christian organisations here and overseas, both as a local minister and as a teacher of liturgy, communication and developing integrated ministry. At present my home church is St John's but I help out once a month at St David's and have ecumenical links.

On days off you can often find me out with my camera or walking, and my house has extra insulation from my many books.

So until we meet in person my greetings and prayers and a reminder that I am here should you need me.

Eileen

St Martins has appointed The Reverend John Vincent as its new priest in charge.



Ordained into the Church of England in 1987 and served for 16 years in the Diocese of London as a curate in Hampton and Shepperton and vicar of St Philip and St James, Whitton. Diocesan roles included Communications Advisor to the Bishop of Kensington and a member of The Bishop's Council. John joined the Army in 2003, serving as a unit chaplain to 9/12th Royal Lancers, followed by postings to 5 Regt RA, The Infantry Training Centre Catterick, 1 MERCIAN and Joint Service Signals Unit. He then served as Brigade Chaplain to 101 Logistic Brigade, 42 Brigade and Army Headquarters North West and 7 Infantry Brigade (The Desert Rats) and Headquarters East. John has been on operational tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and worked abroad in Germany, Cyprus and Kenya. He is currently Senior Chaplain London District and Chaplain to The Household Division.

John has an interest in bereavement within the military community, having written a thesis on operational deaths and the continuing bonds of grief, and is currently chaplain to The War Widows' Association.

John is married to Karen, an advance nurse practitioner and they have two grown up children, Martha who lives in Birmingham and Wills who lives in Manchester.

In his spare time, John enjoys writing, recording and performing music and played bass guitar and double bass for many years on the jazz and corporate circuits. Once rules allow, he hopes to be performing again. Other interests include (though not necessarily in order) greyhounds, art and real ale.

John will be installed in St Martins on Thursday 23 September.

THE CORNER STONE – 50th anniversary – 28th May 2021

A Venture of Faith

Members of the congregation might be interested that 28th May this year sees the 50th Anniversary of The Corner Stone coffee house, for which the near-derelict St John's crypt was converted, under the auspices of the then Council of West End Churches (St John's, St Cuthbert's, St Andrew's & St. George's, St George's West, Palmerston Place and St Mary's Cathedral). The proposal for a coffee house emerged from CWEC's earlier Cephias Cellar and Cephias House projects, the former a beat club with live bands, providing a safe place for teenagers in the basement of St George's West on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings, and the latter a large house offering accommodation and support in a community setting to young people with work and other problems, alongside other more settled young people in their first jobs. Out of these projects grew the recognition of a need within the West End of Edinburgh for a late-night coffee house where 20–40 year olds could meet at the weekend in the centre of town in a safe and relaxed environment after

visiting pubs (which then closed at 10pm), concerts, theatres, cinemas, etc.

And so, in May 1971, The Corner Stone was born, opening every Friday (9 – midnight), Saturday (9 – 1am) and Sunday (8 – 11.30pm) until the premises were handed back to St John's in 1985. In its hey-day The Corner Stone was run by a team of up to 100 volunteers from the west end churches and elsewhere. It fulfilled a much-appreciated ministry of hospitality, reaching out with a welcome to a broad cross-section of the community, especially up to the time when pub licensing hours were extended. In pursuing 'mission without strings', exploratory, ecumenical and lay-led, and providing a service to the community, it also proved, for many of those involved, a thoroughly challenging, formative and fulfilling experience in their own personal journey of faith. Throughout its life The Corner Stone was immensely grateful for the consistent support and encouragement of members and ministers of the West End churches. In the early 1980s it was becoming clear that, owing to the changing social context and circumstances, The Corner Stone in its original form was reaching the end of its natural life, and after a time of opening during the day, the difficult decision was taken to wind down the voluntary project. St John's then ran a commercial café which continued until major redevelopment of the terrace and reopening in 2018.

One reason for volunteer support reducing prior to 1985, was that specialised needs were being identified among the clientele. Teenagers had already moved to Eclipse, a club in the original Cephias premises, but a number of hostel-

dwellers and homeless men, especially, craved a nutritious meal rather than coffee and snacks.

And so the "Steps" project was initiated and run for almost two decades by a small band of helpers who provided a homely evening meal atmosphere from, first a flat in the St. Cuthbert's complex, and then in Kirk House, Candlemaker's Row.

But by 1999 a number of other voluntary agencies were providing food and support to street sleepers and loners, and so those committed volunteers reluctantly agreed that Steps would also

close permanently. By then, Edinburgh was a very different place from the 1971 era when the Corner Stone first opened.

But the original helpers remain as a community, with many enduring friendships over the years and distances.

Copy by Norman Shanks, Irene MacKenzie, Eileen Mackintosh, Clephane Hume and Anne Sturrock

2 April 2021

Alastair McIntosh came to offer his reflection at the Climate Sunday Service on 6th June.

RIDERS ON THE STORM

Alastair McIntosh

THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE SURVIVAL OF BEING

Climate change is the greatest challenge to humankind today. While the coronavirus sheds a light on the vulnerability of our interconnected world, the effects of global warming will be permanent, indeed catastrophic, without a massive shift in human behaviour.

In this profound new book, Alastair McIntosh explores the science, psychology and spirituality of climate change. He summarises the up-to-date science and shows the damage caused by both climate-change denial and alarmism. In outlining the technological and policy options to cut greenhouse gases, he argues that neither will be anywhere near sufficient unless we grasp the 'twin drivers' of climate change – world population and excess consumption – in ways that deepen people's dignity and freedom.

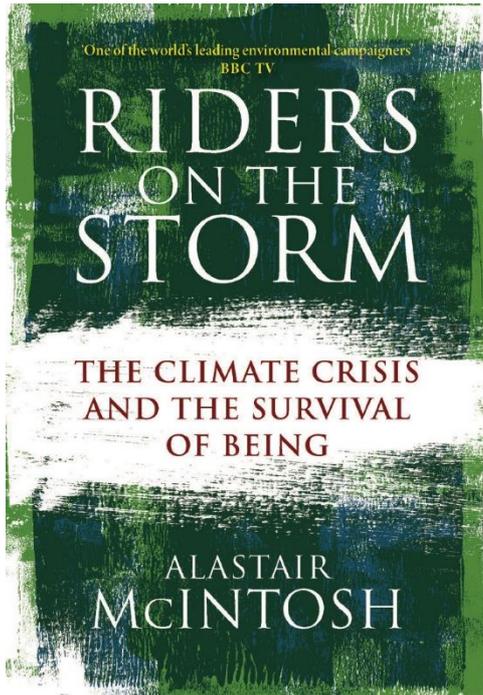
This book's enduring importance lies in the unique remedies proposed: our urgent need to reconnect with the earth, to build community and transform climate change into a chance to discover deeper aspects of our humanity. McIntosh offers a scintillating discussion of ways forward. Weaving together science, politics, psychology and spirituality, this guide examines what it takes to make us riders on the storm.

Alastair McIntosh is an independent writer, broadcaster, speaker and activist who is involved in a wide range of contemporary issues, from land reform, globalization and nonviolence to psychology, spirituality and

ecology. He is the author of *Soil and Soul* (2001), *Hell and High Water* (2008), and *Poacher's Pilgrimage* (2016). **He lives in Scotland and is available for interview.**

Riders on the Storm

Alastair McIntosh £9.99, paperback ISBN 9781780276397 **Published August 13 2020**
Also available as an eBook



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Eco Group News

ECO Congregation

Good News about Fair Trade Bananas!

In the March newsletter, we looked forward to Fair Trade Fortnight, supporting it by buying more fairly traded goods, and focussed particularly on bananas.

ST MARTIN'S ART SHOW 2021

Our Art Show will go ahead this year, coronavirus restrictions allowing. The dates will be Sunday 29th August (Preview evening) to Saturday 4th September.

There may be some changes to the usual format, but the basics will remain the same.

I hope all the artists and crafters among you will please think about entering some fabulous exhibits as always. Please let me know very soon if you intend to enter so that I know if we will have enough to continue planning.

And of course, everyone who is able to help “man” the show for assistance and security please mark the dates in your diaries and be ready to volunteer. We cannot do this without you.

Lynn Dailly

Craft club

Craft club was temporarily suspended at the start of lockdown and opened again briefly in September in the main Church Hall for a few meetings but sadly had to close again with the new restrictions from Friday 9th October. The Craft Club is now taking place on zoom.

Liz

St Martin's Strollers

For some reason most of the walks planned for 2020 have not been done. I'll investigate this to work out why. In the meantime the suggestion is that we hold over the walks planned for 2020 to 2021 when we can meet again. Peter

One Stroller's walks



Walk in Cammo Estate by the River Almond and back by Corstorphine hill.

The estate has pleasant woodlands to walk through a small canal, ruin of the old house and stables and an old walled garden with many wild flowers. Then a walk by the River Almond very scenic and peaceful.





Tynninghame Beach really a beautiful and peaceful place to walk such a large area that even with other people there you feel you have the place to yourself. I used to visit this beach with Toby Burns a friend who lived in East Linton in 1975 when I first lived in Edinburgh.



Zoom and Church Services

Church services started again from Palm Sunday also available on zoom.

A big thank you to Rosie for hosting the Zoom Service.

Calendar: June / July

June 2021

Sun 6
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion – Climate Sunday**
Preacher: Alastair MacIntosh

Sun 13
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion – Proper 11**
Preacher: Jenny Robertson

Sun 20
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion – Proper 12**
Preacher: Sarah Kilbey

Sun 27 10.30am **Celebrating Communion – Proper 13**
Preacher: Stuart Robertson

July 2021

Sun 4
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion – Proper 14**
Preacher:

Sun 11
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion Proper 15**
Preacher:

Sun 18
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion Proper 16**
Preacher:

Sun 25
Church 10.30am **Celebrating Communion – Proper 17**
Preacher:

The cherry blossom has been phenomenal this year.

