

I've been asked about my background.

I was ordained in Wick St Andrew's and Thrumster, Caithness, and was then minister in Glasgow : Knightswood, before moving to Aberfeldy linked with Amulree+ Strathbraan and Dull+Weem for over 20 years. So I was a Dull minister !

Since retiring I have been locum in several congregations, am vice chair of Street Pastors in Scotland, and am part of Education Scotland's HMI school inspection teams.

Before marriage my wife Ruth was a ward sister in PRI, and now looks after the Sunday School in Letham St Mark's.

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Dear Friends

I have been appointed as locum as from 1 January, and am taking this opportunity to wish you a very

It is a great privilege to share the traditional good news of Jesus in our fast changing world with

all its uncertainties. When there are so many hurting and lonely people I love the headline on St John's website :

"All are welcome in this place"

and plan that as the theme for Wednesday 1.00-1.20 services

The 2020s are spoken of as a permacrisis - the uncertainty many feel as a result of the increasing haunting of climate change, the pandemic with its lockdown consequences, trouble in the Middle East, Fake News, Cyber Wars, scams and the invasion of Ukraine with its global consequent increase in the price of fuel and wheat triggering inflation and tense industrial relations. Many teachers speak about the ongoing negative effect of lockdown. Police and door security staff mention that folk seem to have a much shorter fuse than some years ago! Resilience has become strained, and hope is in short supply.



First century Rome was the centre of political power and opposed to the Christian faith. Writing to encourage the handful of early Christians Paul speaks about the transforming power of the good news and goes on

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

What a super vision of the church - overflowing with hope!

For in the midst of all the troubles and uncertainties

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and for ever"

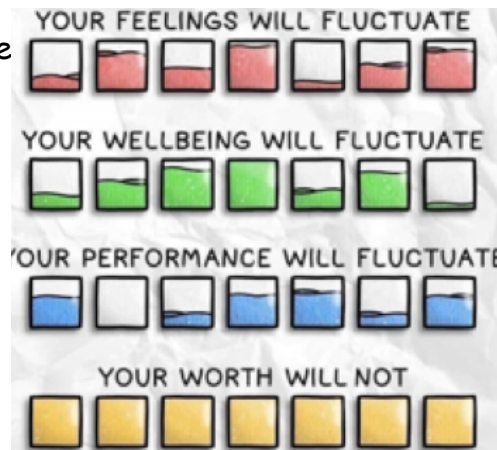
People seek identity and security

in a strangely fluid society and very unstable world.

God has placed secure value on each person's life:

"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3.16



Our secure worth : index-linked to eternity !

Far from God's offer being the imposition of something alien to the wellbeing of young and old

"our own completeness is only realised in Him" Col.2.9 JBP

or in the traditional prayer of St Augustine

"You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in You".

In the troubles of the 16th century **St John's** played a key part in the Reformation, where in contrast to the corruption of the then church and the religious rituals by which they tried to earn favour with God, there was a re-focus on the historic revolutionary offer of a living relationship with God, made possible by Jesus's death and resurrection.

In the troubles of this 21st century may that loving message resound from us and God's love radiate from us, as hope overflows from us individually and from St John's. It is a great privilege to share with you the joyous responsibility of letting God's love and hope fill us and overflow from us !

If I can help, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

With warm prayerful good wishes

Sandy

(Rev) Sandy Gunn