



Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 19 July 2020**

Dear friends,

Welcome to another Sunday Reflection time.

You will all have heard the announcement from the Scottish Government that places of worship are to open. Let me say that whilst the news lifted my spirit, it has come with many restrictions, one of which is the limited number of people who can attend.

At the moment our sanctuary in Naseby remains closed until the proper checks and distancing measures are put in place, along with the cleaning regime afterwards and the approvals from both Presbytery and our Kirk Session. Please bear in mind that the opening of worship spaces are solely for worship when it happens. The Communication Team are writing to all hall users to keep them up to date as the opening up of our halls is further down the line.

I received a lovely phone call from a lady who thanked the Church for the Reflections she received even though she is not a member of Broomhill Hyndland. Many thanks to all those who continually pass these Reflections on so that others can benefit. You are sowing the seed for God's Kingdom - how appropriate over the past few weeks with our Gospel Readings from Matthew!

Jill will also be sending out a second little booklet of prayers and poems called, 'Postcards'. Like the first one it is based on the daily text prayers some of the congregation and others receive.

As always, take care.

Sow the seeds. Spread the message. With every blessing

George

Pentecost 8A Sunday 19 July 20 (Proper 11)

For those who like to follow all the lectionary readings for the Sunday and dip into the Old Testament and Epistles, the readings for this Sunday are:

Genesis 28:10-19a; Isaiah 44:6-8; Psalm 139:1-11; Romans 8:12-15; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

Our Sunday reflection will be based on Matthew but please read and ponder the suggested Scripture and see how it connects and what it says to you.

.... read, reflect, rejoice...

INTROIT

All this world is God's own field,
bearing fruit his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown,
are to joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear:
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.
(233 CH4 verse 2)

Welcome to our time of worship in homes and in hearts.

CALL

We gather together in Your presence with expectation,
hungry for an encounter with You, eager to hear Your Word.

Open our eyes and ears to the presence of Your Holy Spirit.
May the seeds of Your Word scattered among us this morning
fall on fertile soil.
May they take root in our hearts and lives,
and produce an abundant harvest of good words and deeds.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our teacher and our Lord.

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

PRAYER

Lord,
how often have we heard, or used the phrase,
'Not in my back yard?'
How often have we wished
that we could batten down the hatches in our own castle,
or find a cosy corner out of the cold winds?
How often have we spotted
that which we would term 'weed' or 'darnel'
and not wanted it in our area or neighbourhood,
local surroundings,
or our church?
Oh, Lord, we write the acronym
NIMBY
if not with pen and paper
but with a faith that tries to separate sinner and saint.
St Augustine called the church 'Corpus Permixture',
heaven forbid,
saints and sinners,

good and bad, wheat and tares together.
Father, forgive us,
when we use the cliché 'not in my backyard'
for we make judgements and use stereotypes
which may be false:-
the tattoo, the 'misplaced' jewellery, the goth, the single parent,
the unemployed, the mod, the rocker...
we forget the weeds in our own lives
and that you are the organic gardener.
Undesirable plants,
noxious weeds,
unwholesome attributes,
unwanted people.
Use your hoe carefully, Lord.
In your name we pray saying,
'Our Father... '
AMEN

And now we turn to Scripture, to Matthew 13: 24-30,
36-43
Let us listen, read and hear the Word of God ...

... this is the Word of the Lord, thanks be to Him.



Before the Reflection listen quietly to music or listen
to the quietness and let God in.
Say 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening' softly in repetition.

ILLUMINATION

Loving God, open our hearts, so that we may feel the breath and play of
your Spirit. Open our lips that we may drink in the delight and wonder of
life. Touch our lives with the life of Christ. AMEN

REFLECTION

It was Sir Alex Ferguson who once said of the now Tottenham manager,
Jose Mourinho, 'He was certainly full of it, calling me "Boss" and "Big Man"
when we had our post-match drink after the first leg. But it would help if his
greetings were accompanied by a decent glass of wine. What he gave me
was paint stripper."

Ouch.

And of the 'even tempered' Dennis Wise, "He could start a row in an empty
house."

Fergie could always talk a good game but I have to confess my mother was
known to make use of that quote about 'fighting in an empty house'!! I
have often wondered how that would start, perhaps with the Sky channel
going down, milk being off in the fridge, wine that corked... the list goes on.

What it does tell me: are there two-sides to a personality - that we are made up of positives and negatives, good points and bad? We all could cause a fight because within us, as Jesus points out, we are both wheat and tare. Both grow inside of us, it depends on which one we nurture.

If there is a mixture in you and I, it is also true that it is applicable to the news we often hear. We are drawn to the possibility that there may be a resurgence of Covid in the winter. In England there is confusion and debate regarding the wearing of face masks; the recession; the virus causing havoc in war-torn countries already devastated by so much.

Then there are stories of the British gymnasts and how they were treated and the world of Jeffery Epstein, to name two of the many stories that we are confronted with 24 hours a day.

It feels like goodness is being swallowed and smothered by something darker or if we focus on Jesus' words from Matthew, the weeds are taking over the fields of wheat. In our modern world we are bombarded by news that most often tends to be negative and we ourselves tend to feel overwhelmed. Over these past months, many of you have told me that you only watch or listen to the news once a day because to listen constantly is too depressing.

Where is the wheat amongst these weeds?

The farmer in the story doesn't take a knee-jerk reaction – he waits.

He waits in the same way that we should when you receive an email that pings into your inbox and when you read it you pull your hair out and want to type an instant reply! The sensible person leaves the response because she or he knows that things done in haste brings a lot of repenting! I have colleagues who will reply by post because that gives the receiver time to calm down and it puts distance of time and space between them!

Yes, we are both wheat and weeds.

The farmer realises that both co-exist until the harvest.

It is tempting to look only for good news stories in order to cover up the bad, to admire the wheat and deny the weed, but I've always been impressed by the people who can, at interview or on a form, understand the need to be aware of their own 'strengths' and 'weaknesses'. It's a sign of maturity to recognise our faults, and similarly, to be honest that there are skills that we also have.

We need the wide perspective. We need to see the whole field. We need to see the predicament the world is in but be able to balance it with other brighter things and, through it all, remember that even in the darkest moments, as the Psalmist wrote in 139, the dark is not dark for God.

So even if you are having a rough time, that you feel it is just weeds, even then God is with you... and how is that for redressing the balance!

Another parable of Jesus – last week, the sower and his seed: this week, the farmer and his field mixed with both weeds and wheat. There's always a temptation to 'pull up' that which doesn't fit into our plans, our ideologies, our faith, our own enlightened thoughts, narrowing the circle ensuring that it is those and only those who have passed the litmus test. Both the church and the world are made up the same way, with this mixture. Someone once

complained to me about the standard of those entering the ministry nowadays but I had to point out where God was choosing from!

It is often said that we only have control on where we focus our attention. Rather than pulling on the weeds, we are to be wheat: good loving people, producing seed in what can seem an unjust world, even where weeds abound. That's where we need to put our energy.

"You'd cause a fight in an empty room."

I'll take that as a compliment...

... in the same way as, "when God made you, he threw away the mould."

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER

'Let the weeds and wheat grow together' you said.

That's true, Lord, isn't it?

That both wheat and weeds describe who we are:

the joys that bring smiles to our face,

the angers and pains that confound us –

they are all part of who we are,

they are our teachers,

the wheat and the weeds,

and also where you abide.

The story of our grace has many chapters,

like the Holy Book itself,

chapters of excitement, chapters of suspense,

chapters of intrigue,

chapters when the hero flees

and cries out for help.

We too are books,

pages revealing both the wheat

and the weeds,

but the story, our story,

is not finished,

and you Lord

know how to harvest.

Almighty Creator

sow us into our world.

Sometimes,

like the farmer's field,

we will feel we don't belong.

Sometimes our discipleship will be ignored

and sometimes it will blossom.

Sometimes we will sow seeds of fairness

and they will get trampled under foot
and then there will be times
that our effort bears fruit.
Failure and fruit.
failure and fruit.
Wheat and weeds,
wheat and weeds.
AMEN

BENEDICTION

Divine Gardener,
You tend us in steadfast love,
Unending mercies and eternal faithfulness;
You cultivate true friendship with You
through boundless forgiveness.
In Christ, this faithful love is planted in our hearts.
Gathered as your community of believers, our family of faith,
with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us,
we can now produce forgiveness for each other as we are forgiven.
Thanks be to You.
Go in Peace,
and may the blessing of God Almighty,
Father,
Son and Holy Spirit
be with you all.
AMEN

Whose house is this?

(Last week, it was Carol
and Gordon MacCallum)



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