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Broomhill Hyndland  
Parish Church

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*"Lighting the Way"*

for Sunday 5 July 2020

Dear friends,

Welcome to another Sunday. It's hard to believe we are now in July and thinking of holidays but with nowhere to go!

We are hoping that with the easing of lockdown, and as we move through the phases, it won't be long until a Sunday becomes something like the Sundays we have been used to. Our Health and Safety Committee are working through the Risk Assessment documentation in preparation - my thanks to all those who are looking at all the matters connected to our buildings.

Last week, in the manse, we upgraded the broadband which was sorely out-of-date and very slow, so all the passwords had to change on televisions and computers. On Thursday, needing work printed, my printer decided to inform me that there was an 'error'. All morning I looked at settings on my computer, opening and trying everything possible to get the paperwork out, to no avail.

Down strolled the teenager and within 5 minutes the printer was working perfectly well again! Old hands need young hands. Old minds need young minds. Old words: 'Let's watch a picture,' new words; 'we've got that on Netflix!'

We learn from each other day and daily,  
George

Pentecost 6A Sunday 5 July 20 (Proper 9)

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 24: 34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Song of Songs 2: 8-13; Psalm 145: 8-15; Romans 7: 15-25a; Matthew 11: 25-30.

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

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

**INTROIT**

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together,  
with chords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord,  
bind us together.

O, bind us together with love.

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

## **CALL**

Come all who are weary  
of wealth, of poverty, of power, of struggle, of division.

Come all who are heavy-laden  
with too much, with too little, with anxiety, with fear, with anger.

Come all who have hope  
for liberation, for peace, for freedom, for the kingdom.

Hear these words  
"See, I am making all things new."

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

## **PRAYER**

Eternal God,  
you sing a song of silence  
to our noisy hearts and noisy world,  
inviting us to still our restless souls,  
to find peace  
in these moments.  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
you dance to the music,  
revealing the God  
who plays in the harmony of creation  
in your gentle touch,  
the tenderness of your words  
and also the challenge of them,  
the goodness of heart and mind  
and the peace of our shared yoke with you  
as we travel together.

Spirit of Rest,  
on this day of rest,  
as we hand over our worries to you,  
our anger, our hurts, our mistakes,  
may our burdens be lifted  
and that which we carry be songs of joy  
because we share them.  
'Which burden do you choose?' you ask.  
'Hate or love?'  
'Anger or forgiveness?'  
'Pain or peace?'  
'Which?' you ask,  
promising to carry whatever

but knowing  
one is lighter  
and can set us free.  
In your name we pray saying,  
'Our Father...'  
AMEN

And now we turn to Scripture, to Romans 7: 15-25a  
and Matthew 11: 25-30.

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.



## REFLECTION

Yesterday was the 4th of July – Independence Day: the day that America celebrates independence from the sovereignty of Britain. There, in Philadelphia in 1776, Thomas Jefferson put the finishing touches on the Declaration and the ties were severed.

Yesterday was a kind of Independence Day for England too, with pubs and restaurants being opened after over 100 days of lockdown. As I wrote this reflection earlier, I have no idea how those south of the border have reacted to more relaxing of the rules – if the pictures of the beaches of Brighton and Blackpool last week are anything to go by, pity help us, as the balancing act continues to open up between a failing economy and still keeping people safe.

The Gospel reading from Matthew is about independence as well: listen to the words of Jesus, "Come to me, all of you who are carrying heavy loads and I will give you rest."

These words are not just aimed at people tired and exhausted. These are not just words for the likes of us, feeling the weight of a virus and its consequences, they are focussed on those who are wearied by the laws of the Scribes and the Pharisees.

Those in authority sought a God that would suit their lifestyle, a God made in their own image, a God they could control and regularise. What causes Jesus' frustration and anger is the love from God the Father being tied up in rules and regulations and 'thou-shall not' commandments. The Torah, teaching from God, had been transformed from loving teachings to become a heavy burden on people.

They had turned the word of God from steadfast love and grace into perpetual judgement and duty.

The yoke of Law, tied together to make a difference in making the Kingdom of God, had become an albatross round their necks and weighed them down.

We all seek freedom, we all seek independence: part of the worry for many people over these past weeks is that some are happy with the independence but do not take kindly to the responsibilities that are tied to that freedom. I have heard people say that they have grown out of God, they don't need God, but don't we all bow our necks to virtual yokes which masquerade in various disguises, pulling us this way and that way, playing havoc with our better judgement?

All those things which seemed good to us, which we embraced eagerly and with enthusiasm, the need to belong, the need for a cause – where are they pulling us?

What has happened to the independence?

Are these things a burden or a yoke that we need to lay down? What has first call on my life, on yours? A family, a football aficionado, friends of the earth? Is it 'work but no play' with a boss who's always on call? Is it a family with grandchildren making demands on your time, an ageing and ailing parent, and the yoke that ties us together has become a burden? The overdraft that we embraced which gave us freedom and the independence we sought, now, along with loans and store cards, has become a weight difficult to hold?

I could go on – the debt, the diet, the cause, the club all pushing and pulling, so many calls that our shoulders are rubbed raw.

For Jesus' listeners it was the weight of the law that was putting them on their knees.

For humanity, a desire to be free, a wish to do what we like, but tied into that humanity, which Paul recognises as the conflict of mankind, is that we will always be weighed down: "For I don't do what I would like to do but instead do what I hate."

Admitting to this frailty is a liberation in itself.

To recognise that we are not perfect should be uplifting.

To know that we will always be reliant on God should set us free.

What could be more offensive to our deep feelings and our strivings to be at the top, to be the best, than to understand the words of Paul that we are powerless and need help?

Think of the times you have admitted to someone that you can't do something on your own. Perhaps you feel guilty, shameful even, but that honest admittance frees you and allows support and help to be given. But we are too stubbornly enslaved in our efforts to be good and do good.

I like the words from the Lutheran minister Nadia Bolz-Weber, "No one is climbing the spiritual ladder. We don't continually improve until we no longer

need God. We die and are made new, but that's different from spiritual self-improvement."

Independence Day – this is not a political statement  
but are you sure you want to be independent?

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

AMEN

## **PRAYER**

'I did it my way,'  
the crooner sang.  
Almighty Father,  
how often have we felt the urge  
to do it our way,  
the lyrics learned  
from a lifetime of habit and routine,  
DNA , peers and parents?

'Our way', 'my way',  
what we think is freedom,  
'freedom!', we shout on horseback  
with a Saltire marked on our forehead.  
Our independence,  
our 'right' to do it the way we choose.  
But here's the rub:  
the past, the future, the present  
has you God,  
rooted there too –  
the light in the darkness,  
the alpha and omega  
book-binding my life,  
every life,  
and since Jesus is the A and the Z,  
he encompasses everything in between!  
'Regrets, we've had a few '  
and we will continue to have  
as we try to make it on our own  
but continue to surprise us, Lord,  
catch us on the hop from the old ruts we have made,  
and then smile,  
that 'you did it your way'!!  
AMEN

## **BENEDICTION**

God of the burden  
take my heavy load.  
Jesus, teacher of sinners,  
take my heavy load.  
Enlivening Spirit,  
take my heavy load.  
Come, all who are weary,  
to the One who will bear it all.  
God of the quiet times  
speak peacefully to our souls.  
God of the noisy times  
share our shouts of joy.  
God of the sad times  
comfort and console us.  
God of the happy times  
smile and laugh with us.  
Weighed down  
or untroubled...  
Go in peace...

Whose house is this?

(Last week, it was  
Robert and Helen  
Jamieson)



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