



Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 2 August 2020**

Dear friends,

Welcome to another service.

It is hard to believe that this Sunday finds us in August.

Whilst lockdown seemed to drag, everyday a Groundhog Day, suddenly we find ourselves in a new month and wonder where the time and the summer have gone.

Regarding the opening of our Naseby building in some form, the process is closer. At the time of writing (the end of July), if the Kirk Session approve the recommendations from the Risk Management Team, these documents will be sent for approval by the Presbytery. An acceptance of what we have done by the Presbytery will mean that we will be allowed to open Naseby in some form but please remember the important information given in the last newsletter.

I still hope that someone in the National Church is pushing the Scottish Government to relax this blanket number of 50 people for worship. It seems such a random number considering the opening of other venues and by the fact that following the work of our team we could manage more. I wait with bated breath.

The Presbytery also contacted me to sadly announce the death of the Rev Bill Alston who died, aged 91, on Wednesday 22 July. Some of you may remember Bill who was the minister in St David's Knightswood. We remember all at St David's in our prayers.

Can I once again thank all of you for continuing to share the Reflections and the prayers far and wide. I have received phone calls, emails from down South and even had a lovely chocolate cake delivered to the manse! Interestingly, this Sunday's service fits in perfectly! If you are inclined to respond that way - God bless you!!

George

Pentecost 10A Sunday 2 August 20 (Proper 13)

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 32:22-31; Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm 17:1-7; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21

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...

CALL

(based on Genesis 32)

O Wrestling God,
contending with us until daybreak,
holding us in the grip of your argument,
grappling with our questions and doubts,
You who strive to deepen us through struggle,
and strengthen us through adversity:
hold on to us now
in that fierce love that will never let us go.

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

INTROIT

For your generous providing
which sustains us all our days,
for your Spirit here residing,
we proclaim our heartfelt praise.
Through the depths of joys and sorrows,
though the road be smooth or rough,
fearless, we can face tomorrow
for your grace will be enough.
Verse 1 (655 CH4)

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

PRAYER

God of goodness,
source of strength and wholeness,
in our efforts to follow you
at times we feel weak and lack energy to grow.
As we rest and are silent
and stay a while in your presence,
let us realise the areas of our lives
we starve of attention:
our commitment to family and friends,
our efforts in work and community,
and our quiet times focused on you
in prayer and reflection.
Source of life,
may we relish this moment with you;
may your Spirit restore us,
your love enthuse us and in your acceptance
build us up for the days ahead.
May we be able to give back to you
the very best of all that we are and all that we have.

In your name we pray saying,
'Our Father...`
AMEN

And now we turn to Scripture, to Matthew 14:13-21
Let us listen, read and hear the Word of God ...



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

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Ever present God, this day enfolds us and surrounds us. Be in our speaking and our thinking. Be in our lives and our lips. Be in our hearts and souls.
AMEN

REFLECTION

'Food, glorious food, we're anxious to try it,
three banquets a day, our favourite diet!

Just picture a mammoth steak, fried, roasted or stewed,
oh food, wonderful food, marvellous food, glorious food!'

I loved the musical and the book about Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens.

The song and the story came back to mind with this Sunday's Gospel reading and the only miracle that appears in all four Gospels... but..

before we reflect on this wonderful story of the Loaves and the Fishes, I want to take you to a party! This was no ordinary party, this was the Garden Party at Holyrood House. Pam and I were dressed to the nines and hammered along the M8 motorway from Glasgow to Edinburgh to meet Her Majesty.

You might wonder why we hadn't taken our time to get to such an auspicious occasion but Francesca had caught her nail on a pair of jeans and it had bent back and Pam in her finery had to rush our bold daughter to a nail-bar shop to sort the problem!

So that's why I admit to breaking the speed limit - I had been invited by the Queen but it was okay, it was one of her highways!

There, in the gardens and the grounds of the Palace, we mingled with the hoi polloi, practiced our bowing and curtsying and had shared pleasantries with those we met.

Pam and I also met a previous Session Clerk and his wife, Bob and Lily, who were also invited (so they told us!!)

But let me get back to the food. Funnily enough, despite our expectations, there were no cucumber sandwiches, though the sandwiches were precisely measured and cut, matching the shape of whatever tasty morsel sat above.

We are talking here of catering at its finest order but when you grew up with older siblings who responded like Oliver seeking extra helpings and the race to the kitchen door, these nibbles were never going to suffice.

All these people in the Palace Grounds – how do you feed them ?

All those people gathering around Jesus – how do you feed them?

'Give them something to eat,' said Jesus. 'You must be joking', said the disciples.

A catering problem big style – not even to be solved by bite-size sandwiches prepared at a Royal Function. Now the best way to move people on, so I believe, is to keep them standing! Non-verbally you are saying to someone that you have limited time. Standing up moves people on.

When we were at the Garden Party, we were there for a lengthy time, awaiting the Queen. Think how sore your feet get – especially with high heels! You move about to keep the blood flowing but your legs get sore and the plates you are carrying need a place to put them down – another way of moving people on.

What a way to try a Kirk Session meeting! Business done in a flash!!

What does Jesus do? He asked them to sit down.

Yes, he asks them to sit down on the grass. There is no agenda here, no urgency, no diary to follow – stop rushing around, just be. There is something to be said that God asks us to sit down. Most of the time in Jesus' ministry he has no home: here is one of the few opportunities that he himself is the host. This is not a time for teaching or healing – this fellowship time.

We, I believe, have done wonderfully well in coping with this pandemic by our church. The Zoom services have reached almost a hundred people but what we miss so much is the fellowship. We underplay the need for fellowship even after a Kirk service. How many come back? Bearing in mind most are standing, how long do we stay?

Compare that with a Mary's Meal event? A Coffee Morning? You can't get rid of people! You can't get a seat! Why? Because people are in a relationship, they are having conversation face to face, they are asking in a more in depth way how they are.

This is one of many difficulties we will have when our buildings open. We will worship but the conversation from distanced pews will be limited and the fellowship in the hall afterwards ??

Sitting down is about the renewing and developing and the growing of fellowships.

Sitting down means we are hungry for fellowship. That's why we come to church - because we are honest enough to know that we are hungry for something deeper and that everyday life doesn't satisfy. If we are self-satisfied we don't come for fellowship with God and others will make no difference to our lives. That's what the connection with many of the readings for this Sunday are all about – being thirsty, being hungry, being like Oliver and saying 'May I have some more?'

In crude terms, we come for more bread, for more happiness, for someone to listen more. We come to be loved more. We come because we are in a relationship with Jesus.

When you invite someone for a meal you chat over the dining table learning more about them. Similarly we learn more about Jesus and more about ourselves. We discover that satisfaction comes, like the miracle itself, from shar-

ing with others, giving what we have, though we might think it is little and will not travel far. We give to Jesus, knowing that he will transform the gift into something special.

'Sit down,' Jesus said.

Two simple words that Jesus wants to spend time with you.

The Oliver musical comes into my head. I think of the songs as I picture the miracle on the hillside...

'Food glorious food,' 'I'd do anything.'

'Consider yourself one of us.'

I can't think of a nicer song that Jesus hummed as the fish and bread were shared.

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

PRAYER

'Everyone ate and had enough'.

Your generosity is excessive, Lord.

Your grace overgenerous,

your love and presence

readily available.

Almighty Father,

we are grateful for all the blessings we receive,

for the goodness it brings to our lives,

the abundant life that it offers.

Forgive us when we hoard your goodness,

stockpiling for a second wave.

for grasping and gathering

and making sure that our attics are full,

our cupboard shelves groaning,

separating ourselves from others.

Forgive us from not seeing the possibility of miracles

in our own lives,

by sharing what we have,

sharing the blessings we receive

so that others are fed.

Have we learned nothing from your fish and bread story

that giving is the key no matter how little ?

Teach us to invite others in to that which you share with us.

How did we grow so blind and foolish

that we would see so much beauty and life,

joy and laughter,

to pass us unnoticed?
How poor we have become
making others poor too
because we have forgotten your love,
because we have forgotten to bring our baskets forward,
not realising that giving is living
And that by sharing our lives are filled.
Open our eyes to the miracle on the hillside.
Open our eyes to the plentiful goodness
for all. AMEN

BENEDICTION

Jesus gave us his all.
It is now our turn
to give our all to him.
Having been filled
by his love once more and refreshed
we go to the task he set
and fill others with his love.
Go in Peace
and may the Blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

FINAL THOUGHT

Give thanks this week for all we share in
the Upside Down Kingdom
that we live in.

Why don't you keep a note of the good
things given to you?

Whose house is this?
(Last week, it was Ruth,
Scott and Naomi Duff)

