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Broomhill Hyndland  
Parish Church

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*"Lighting the Way"*

for **Sunday 9 August 2020**

Dear friends,

Welcome to another service.

Over this past while technology has been the key for many of us, whether by computer, emails or Zoom; or mobile phones, FaceTime and texts.

I wonder if you have ever sent the wrong message to someone. I wonder if you have pressed a button and sent, then regretted your lack of concentration.

You may be aware of the woman who received the text 'I'm here for you.'

Delighted by the text and that someone cared, she sent a text message back not only thanking the person for the interest shown but also, in the text message, opened up to how hard a week she had had. Then, not recognising the number, she ended the text by asking who it was.

The reply, 'This is your Uber taxi driver, waiting outside for you.'

Oops!!

There may be a little thought worth pondering over. 'I'm here for you' - has someone said that to you but the words meant very little? What about the Church?

Do we use that phrase, promise so much, but don't deliver?

We've tried our best during these difficult months in many different ways - 'We are here for you.' Thank you to all who have done their bit - I am rightly proud of the effort put in. As you reflect this day remember most of all that Christ is here for you.

George

Pentecost 11A Sunday 9 August 20 (Proper 14)

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 37:1-14,12-28; 1st Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 85:8-13; Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33

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**

O God who is greater than the most powerful forces in this world,  
enable us to be still and know that You are God.

O Lord who answers out of the whirlwind of everyday life,  
breathe in us Your Holy Spirit to strengthen,  
comfort, and guide us in the midst of the storm.

O still, small voice, speak to us this hour  
that we might become makers of Your peace  
in our homes, in our communities, in our world.  
We pray all this in the name of the One who calmed the raging sea.

**The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.**

## **INTROIT**

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,  
when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?  
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,  
will your anchor drift, or firm remain?

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll;  
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!*

Verse 1 (737 CH4)

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

## **PRAYER**

Lord, we have a friend.

You have made it so!

It is you; it is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

When we call out your name, you come running.

When we call out his name, he comes—  
walking across the troubled waters of life,  
calming storms,

bringing healing and peace.

Today make that unconditional and faithful love  
not just the fragile illusion of a weak,  
unsteady faith,

but the core energy and conviction  
at the heart of an increasingly growing faith;  
faith in your ability to care for all your people.

Lord, sometimes we make Christian Faith too complicated;  
it becomes an issue of fact or fiction;  
truth or illusion.

Forgive us when we become too preoccupied  
with finding specific answers to the questions of life,  
too concerned with explaining the details  
of the stories contained in scripture,  
too impassioned in seeking  
to prove those events that some call modern day miracles.  
Strange, unexplainable,  
and special things happen in this life.  
Wonderful, amazing,  
and life-changing experiences are made known.  
Lord, Your power,  
your influence  
and the work you do in the world  
are miracles that can only be explained by divine energy and purpose.  
Forgive us when we become too quick  
to laugh off those who are able to believe things  
that we find it hard to believe,  
and forgive us when we criticise  
those who do not believe what we can.  
Forgive us when doubt and fear leave us frozen in time,  
unable to find a way forward.  
Forgive us when we cower behind others,  
unable to move forward boldly in faith.  
Forgive us too when we overlook the fact  
that others may find faith not as easy  
a state of mind and heart to experience as we might do.  
Merciful God, Jesus showed us  
that you do not leave us to sink under the waves of doubt,  
or weakness,  
or even sin.  
He challenged his disciples to live more faithfully  
and more correctly following his example;  
yet he did so with compassion,  
and by first making it possible for them to know his peace.  
Allow us to know that peace now.

In your name we pray saying,  
'Our Father...` AMEN  
And now we turn to Scripture, to Matthew 14: 22-33  
Let us listen, read and hear the Word of God ...

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



## **PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Let every word be the fruit of action and reflection. Reflection without action or tending towards it is mere theory, adding its weight when we are overloaded with it already. Action alone without reflection is being busy pointlessly. Honour the Word eternal and speak to make a new world possible.  
AMEN

## **REFLECTION**

The trip should never have taken place !

Pam and I were in Italy, in Sorrento, and decided to take a trip to the beautiful Island of Ischia. The plan was to spend the day there, enjoying the scenery, touring the shops and enjoying the hot water spas which would benefit my skin.

But the trip should never have taken place...

... (let me say this quietly, it was raining, though if you tell my children that I'm admitting to this... )

It was an organised trip but when we arose and went down for 'prima colazione' we looked at the skies and thought, this will never happen. However, on time, the pick-up arrived and we headed for the marina and took our seat downstairs on a hydrofoil. I don't know if you have ever been on a hydrofoil but they skim across the water and on a calm day that would be pleasant.

On a calm day you would be allowed up on deck... but this was not a calm day.

It was a day for staying in the hotel but there we were, sitting near the back, knowing that the travel company were refusing to lose out financially by abandoning the excursion.

Off the hydrofoil went but since the waves were choppy, rather than like a pebble touching the surface every so often, this craft bounced and people at the front, row by row, started to feel unwell.

I have to say, we found it amusing, 'Who gets seasick, we with the strong stomachs?'

Where do you look when you are below deck? The people suddenly ending their conversation? The people eating and drinking no matter what? Do you focus on the sea to try and concentrate? Do you think of others, like the little Italian signora being dragged to the toilets?

This wasn't as funny as we imagined!

This wasn't funny anymore!

Pam turned to say to me she wasn't feeling a 100 percent – only to see that my face had turned green!!

Oh, the trip on a boat!

We are not un-similar to the Early Christians – faith is not plain sailing. For those in the story of Matthew, the message was real; persecution as a Christian community. What these disciples experienced we know of: that faith does not shield us from life's hardships, from the knocks of life and death. Like the original followers, we know that at times we feel abandoned; we

know that faith can wilt under pressure; we know that the bravado of Peter stands for every disciple of every age, caught between faith and doubt.

Despite spending time with Jesus, listening to his words, watching him in action, our forebears in faith were, at times, weak and fearful. They were just like us. Like them, we can be confident, over-confident, that our faith is rock-solid, that what we believe is not sinking sand, only to discover, as a surprise, how little faith we have.

But then, like Peter, like the other disciples, it is in our weakest moments that we find Christ there. In our most troubling moments we find the strength of God though it might be with hindsight, looking back.

Faith does not save us from trials and tribulations – surely that is one message. What it does is that it gives us strength for them, the strength to face them. It's not we who keep the faith: it's the faith that keeps us.

The gospel story reveals to us the power of faith. It shows us what Jesus always does for his people when the winds are against them, when the storms of life are blowing.

In my lifetime I have met many remarkable people who, in the most trying of times, coped admirably. Don't get me wrong, they had their moments, but their faith kept them going and at times when they felt they were slipping under, they felt the hand of God lifting them up. Christ truly is the anchor in our lives.

As the Cafe Circa sign during lockdown displayed, 'Shut happens.'

Indeed it does. Many things close in on us, life can be hard, unbearable at times but like a boat on the Sea of Galilee or a hydrofoil when your face is turning Granny Smith green, Christ is there.

Even now in the economical collapse, in a virus that will not go away, in hospital appointments that have been ignored or abandoned, in all these choppy moments and more – who comes walking towards us, knowing that we are struggling, upholding us when life is too much for us?

Jesus Christ saves!

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son. AMEN

## **PRAYER**

'Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
safe on his gentle breast.'

That's where we like to be, Lord, safe.

We want the comfort,  
we want the certainty,  
the security, but we want you too  
and the two don't seem compatible.

We like our own comfort zones,  
socially-distanced of course,  
with friends and family  
but we want you too  
and these wants are not harmonious.

Especially in today's world,  
safety is of paramount importance  
and so we batten down the hatches,  
retreat into ourselves and watch others be swamped by their actions.  
But you call us out of the boat.  
You tell us to step out, you encourage us to try deeper water  
away from the shoreline, away from the markers  
that tell us not to pass into the storms of life.  
You throw caution to the wind,  
to let go,  
to plunge in.  
We want you but...  
being safe and sound is not what you want for the followers of you.  
Help us to live our faith more dangerously,  
for it is then and only then are we truly safe and sound. AMEN

## **BENEDICTION**

Witnesses to something amazing,  
something unbelievable.  
Jesus walked on water.  
Witnesses to something frightening,  
someone's failure.  
Peter fell in.  
But Jesus reaches out  
to help his friend,  
and the waters calmed.  
We go now to find ways  
of doing the same.  
Reach out and give someone  
a hand up this week.  
Go in Peace...  
and may the Blessing of  
God Almighty,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

Whose house is this?  
(Last week, it was Andrea  
and John Thomson)



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Broomhill Hyndland Church of Scotland  
Minister: Rev George Mackay  
Tel 0141 959 8694 Mob 07711 569 127  
Church Office: 64 - 66 Randolph Road, Glasgow G11 7JL Tel 0141 569 5059  
office@broomhillhyndlandchurch.org www.broomhillhyndlandchurch.co.uk  
Scottish Charity Number SC007820