



Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 13 September 2020**

Dear friends

Welcome to another Sunday service!

Last Tuesday Glasgow Presbytery met by Webinar. It was quite a strange two and a half hour meeting, sitting by a screen and pressing the icon which raised 'a hand' indicating that you would like to speak! It was also odd because, unlike our Zoom services where you can see most people, Webinar only allowed those at the top table i.e the Moderator, the Business Convenor, and the Clerks to be shown and when it was the appropriate committee's turn, their convenor.

If I was paying attention, 85 churches in Glasgow have now sought approval to be opened in some form, 10 are waiting and 21 have still to apply. According to the Property Convenor, within the Presbytery there are 124 churches, 114 manses and around 400 buildings. When this pandemic passes the Church will need to see what the benefit is, or otherwise, of having so many buildings!

Dare I mention the word 'Christmas'? Well the Prime Minister has and is considering cancelling it!! Andrea has asked me to tell you of the difficulties this year of selling Crossreach calendars and cards. There will be information in the next Newsletter regarding the ways that you can contact Crossreach and still support them.

Jill is in the process of sending out a third prayer booklet called 'Don't Feed me Bread'. Once again, these are prayers primarily sent out by text in the morning. These are also being placed on our Church Facebook page, now causing me stress if there are not enough 'likes'!!

In our prayers today please remember the Macdonald family. Lang Macdonald died on the 3rd September and his funeral takes place on Monday 14th. Please remember Elsie and all the family in your prayers. Announced also in Presbytery was the sudden death of Stuart Bruce, who, I believe, was locum at Balshagray. So remember his family and our local neighbours in prayer.

We are also asked by the Community Responsibility Convenor to remember the Citizen's Advice Bureau in our prayers. Seemingly if Glasgow City Council stops vital core services funding by September there is the possibility that the bureaux in Castlemilk, Easterhouse, Bridgeton, Parkhead and Glasgow Central will close.

Yours in faith,

George

Pentecost 16A Sunday 13 September 20 (Proper 19)

For those who like to follow all the lectionary readings for the Sunday and dip into the Old Testament and Epistles, the readings are Exodus 14: 19-31; Genesis 50: 15-21; Psalm 114; Romans 14: 1-12; Matthew 18: 21-35

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

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

CALL

Mighty God,
you spoke to your people in the pillar of cloud
as they walked together in the wilderness.

Speak to us through your Word today,
that we may hear you calling us
out of the wilderness places in our lives
and into new places you have promised to show us.
In the name of Christ, we pray
AMEN

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

INTROIT

Come, you thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest-home:
all is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, will provide
for our needs to be supplied:
come, to God's own temple, come;
raise the song of harvest-home.
(CH4 – 233)

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

PRAYER

Great Creator,
in our land the seasons are turning and we praise you
for the beech nuts crunching under our feet on woody walks,
for the lift in the fallen leaves as they turn,
for the buckshee brambles jewelling the dew,
for the monstrous midges as they fall from feasting.

In the towns the lights come on yellow pooling the pavements,
we recall the smell of morning coolness of bakeries and breweries;
a yeasty sweetness from steamy vents.
Ethereal evenings and autumn sunsets over spires and cities.
Our world.

Your world is wider.
Your embrace envelops the burgeoning spring in southern places,
the sowers of September seeds, the cultivators of crops
those who wake to welcome the sun
in another sky...
... and broader still
into the firmament where gases swirl and planets collide
and there is infinity beyond words and pictures –
your universe.
We praise you Creator God this day.
All creation congregates to praise you,
you hold each one in the palm of a hand;
you who sees and shares each pain and each pleasure.
All we have is yours;
our words, our waiting, our wilfulness, our want.
You, who together are love,
Creator, Son and Spirit.
We make our prayers through Jesus Christ
and in his words saying:
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
forever.
AMEN

SCRIPTURE READINGS

And now we turn to Scripture. First to Exodus 14: 19-31
and then to Matthew 18: 21-35

Let us listen, read and hear the Word of God ...
... this is the Word of the Lord, thanks be to Him.



PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Spirit of God, who danced at Creation's birth, dance with us now as we hear the word read and proclaimed, that we may be changed, renewed and empowered for mission. AMEN

REFLECTION

'Have you got your bus pass yet?' some kind soul asked me recently.
In the past I would have growled at them and said, 'Don't be so ***** cheeky!
I'm only 59.'
Now, when I'm asked, I seek forgiveness for the thoughts that pass through my
head, and the person that has asked is looking for forgiveness for even asking. I

don't use public transport all that much. I'm happy driving my Italian car but have been there, getting soaked, on a normal Scottish day...

You are fed up waiting at the bus stop...
and so you decide to walk to the next one.

You are halfway there and you hear the bus coming. Do you run forward to the bus stop, or go back?

You are playing a sport; you are a goalkeeper; you come out of your goal and realise you are about to be chipped by the striker; do you charge forward or try to get back?

I sat with my hands over my eyes watching Scotland struggle to beat a makeshift Czech side with my boy, "Are Scotland always this bad?" he asks, and my mind wanders back to Billy Bremner, Peter Lorimer, Kenny Dalglish and the toothless Joe Jordan.

Forward or back?

We know the Exodus story well and we join it after the famous crossing of the Red Sea. Now freed from slavery in Egypt, the people of Israel still had to find a home. For forty years they will be in No-Man's Land, wandering in the desert. At first the main threat had been Pharaoh wanting his runaway slaves back. Later it came less from hostile enemies than from the hardship of the desert itself.

Food and water supplies seemed precarious at best, yet the biggest threat was internal. It was the threat of giving up, losing hope, falling into despair and even the consideration of wanting to go back. There was a temptation to give in and as the memories of slavery faded and the harshness of it, they dreamt of the food available in Egypt.

An uncomfortable place ...

and a place that needed the reassurance of God's presence.

There is a 'No-Man's land' feeling about the Church today; about our world today. We have left behind a past society in which the Christian faith knew where it fitted in the world. We look back to full Kirks, heaving Sunday schools, in the same way I tell my son it was better then. Football was better, life was safer, whether it was or not.

We look back to pre-Covid days – wishing to have appreciated that which we had but will never have in that same way again.

But there is no way back there, anymore than the Israelites could have returned to Egypt.

They had to go through and the only way was to follow God's lead, the pillar of cloud, journeying on to an unknown destination but in company with God.

Do you run back to the stop or run forward?

I don't know whether you recall that on our 2nd Anniversary as a new church, the Principal Clerk, George Whyte, came to preach and commented of a survey somewhere that 90% of the church would rather die than change.

90% would rather look back, or remain in the desert, than move forward.

As a church, as a world, we need to keep seeking and searching for the promised land. Today we celebrate Harvest in the most unusual of ways. We are prevented from handing out goods. We are discouraged to do what we would naturally do celebrating the world that God has made. I remember the days, as a

boy, taking a harvest parcel to the housebound. I remember the joy of seeing a church bulging with fresh produce, the aroma of the land inside the Kirk.

I've had fish netting with fish caught in a theme of the sea; bales of hay and a tractor wheel propped up on the chancel – these were the days, even in a church with an urban setting. These were the days that we celebrated God's good gifts around us, a land full of milk and honey and a promise to keep on seeking the promised land.

But more than that, to look after what God had given us!

Thus our hymn before the sermon in which the Earth asks what we have done in that search for promise. 'One day I said 'Sorry'' out loud to the Earth'...

We may even question God's involvement and even his wisdom but is it not better to follow where he leads, to go where he goes and see the excitement of what lies in front of us than be left behind or look behind?

The hymn before the sermon was unusual because it was the Earth asking the question to what we have done to her. I've always had the belief that all of creation is connected. Paul was right, 'creation groans'.

I believe that's true.

As we journey, hankering back to the way things were, we ask ourselves. Did we look after God's world well? Were we good stewards? Were we making this wonderful world given to us into a promised land? No wonder the Gospel reading asks about forgiveness. I watched the news this week of the Thaine Ice caps of Antarctica melting six times faster than in the 1990's which then raises the sea levels and puts islands under threat. Given so much, what have we done?

Besides the virus we are all aware of the changing temperatures that fluctuate and rise and fall so much – this is not just normal Scottish weather in the one day! As our opening prayer suggests, in the past our seasons were quite distinct: the crispness of autumn, the coldness of winter, the heat of the sun in summer – these experiences do not happen anymore.

'Have you got your bus pass?' was the question.

Yes, I can look back to pre-bus pass days but I still seek a promised land. Like Moses, I may not see the earthly one coming to fruition but I work towards that promise.

And this Harvest Day, I ask for forgiveness in what I have failed to do with the gifts that God has given me.

Two things from the past come to mind. Travelling to France, I loaned my reading material out to a pupil – the book came back dog-eared and bent back.

In a primary school, I loaned my tape of Native American music to a teacher for her son. The tape came back minus the cover.

Neither were apologetic for something that they had borrowed.

Neither sought forgiveness.

And I rejoice that God keeps on forgiving as he keeps on hoping that we learn from our abuses of these gifts, the selfishness of take, take, take, and when we give God his world back it resembles the world we were loaned.

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

AMEN

Think of 'our' world, in prayer...

PRAYER

Living God,
we have packed up and we have left Egypt.
And our rucksacks are full of hope,
of promise,
of longing for a new land,
of the thoughts of milk and honey,
of the idea of freedom,
of living in a safe place,
of knowing everyone's name,
of living in community,
of freedom for everyone.
There are hopes you fill us with.
Not Moses,
not the Israelites,
not the Chosen People,
not the Hebrew nation,
not Joseph's ancestors,
not Abraham's children.
But us.
You fill us with hope for changing the world,
for making it free,
for living with each other in friendship.
And so we look forward,
and we promise to keep our promises,
and we ask for forgiveness
as we try to do better.
Your dream,
in us,
for us.
Help us fulfil it.
AMEN

BENEDICTION

All Christian feasts are feasts of the happy ending,
star out of the stable,
sun out of the dark tomb,
and what end is happy that does not begin?
This Harvest time remember,
deep in dark earth,
the year is young.
Go in Peace...

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