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**Broomhill Hyndland  
Parish Church**

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*"Lighting the Way"*

for **Sunday 25 October 2020**

Dear friends

Welcome to another Sunday. I am delighted you are with me in whatever way and that we are together, praising God as he walks with us through these troubling times.

Another week has passed which for me started with the funeral of Nan Blackstone on Monday. Like at our church services we are unable to sing at the crematoria and we know how much singing lifts our spirits. Likewise, though in a happier note, our first Wednesday service returned (WD40): the service that we have midweek to keep us going and 'top us up' until the Sunday! The usual restrictions applied thanks to the organisation of the Risk Team but it was nice to be back in the Kingsborough Sanctuary. Thanks to Ann and Jane for organising a temporary screen which allowed us to reflect on the words as Donald played.

Our next virtual Kirk Session meeting is pencilled in for Wednesday 4 November, seeking approval of items that the Executive wish to bring forward. The Agenda and the Papers should be in your hands on the Monday 2nd, allowing you time to reflect on the recommendations. As indicated before, we hope to have Junior Church back by Sunday 1st November. They will be in the halls only. Sarah and the Leaders have sent out an email which gives parents and carers the appropriate guidance on how this will be done.

Remember, if you can, and as intimated last Sunday, that November is the month when Christian Aid has chosen to raise their profile after so many events had to be cancelled. Remember also in your prayers the family of Margaret Greer whose funeral takes place this coming Tuesday at Craighton Crematorium.

A reminder that articles for our Newsletter are due today!!

To all who keep working so hard and praying so hard, my thanks.

Every blessing,

George

**Pentecost 22A Sunday 25 October 20 (Proper 25)**

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:

Deuteronomy 34: 1-12; Psalm 90: 1-6, 13-17; Philippians 3: 10-14; Matthew 22: 34-46

For those who miss the hymns I have added them in here. The congregation in Naseby, whilst unable to sing them, have enjoyed following the words, giving them an opportunity to think more of what they mean and how they tie into the theme of the service. It also gives me the chance to 'slip in' some newer ones so that we can learn them for the future!!

Sunday's hymns are: 132 Immortal, invisible, God only wise; 160 Praise my soul, the king of heaven; MP 79 How lovely on the mountains; 622 We sing a love that sets all people free. Get your hymn books out and sing in your own home as we did with Ye Gates at Communion!!

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

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

### **CALL**

We are called to love God with our hearts.

We will do so, when we welcome those tossed aside by the world.

We are called to love God with our souls.

We will do so, when the brokenness around us transforms us into more compassionate people.

We are called to love God with our minds.

We will do so, when we think less of our needs and see each person as our neighbour, our sister, our brother.

### **INTROIT**

Holy Spirit, come, confirm us  
in the truth that Christ makes known;  
we have faith and understanding  
through your helping gifts alone.  
(CH4 640)

### **PRAYER**

Holy God, we come together to worship:  
a people who would like to think that we love you  
with all our hearts and souls, with all our might,

but there are so many other things in our lives  
that clamour for our attention  
that we often relegate you to Sundays and Wednesdays,  
and times when we want you to rescue us.

Most of us really do want you to be the one  
in whom we live and move and have our being.  
We really do want to hear your voice  
above all of the other voices in our lives.  
But we get bogged down in the daily routine.  
We forget who we are.  
We forget who you are.  
We forget what the church is supposed to be.

Forgive us for our choosing to live the way we want  
rather than being the holy people of your hopes.  
May we speak the words you give us as we share the good news of your grace.  
May we seek to love you as completely and as trustingly as Jesus  
who loved us as brothers and sisters of your heart.

So here we are, standing before you today,  
with our human foibles and our short attention spans,  
asking that you would make yourself known to us,  
that you would help us to recognise the presence of the Holy,  
that you would continue to challenge us, inspire us,  
and make us into the people you want us to be.

In your name we pray

(The Lord's Prayer )

Our Father, 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, and lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever, AMEN

And now we turn to Scripture from Deuteronomy 34: 1-12

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



## **MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

## **PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

God beyond vision, God beyond time, God beyond everything, yet contained within it all, may we dream again, catch the vision and let it grow in us. AMEN

## **REFLECTION**

"It's not pasta again," our wee one said, after a day at school.

"No, on the menu tonight is Mackay's Shepherd's pie," I replied, 'square sausage, sliced onions and sliced potatoes.'"

His smile was an acknowledged approval.

Mackay's Shepherd's Pie, that's what we called it when we were young but technically it's a bit like stovies. It is one of the recipes that is re-done as the winter approaches. It's warm, filling and hearty. I make it the way my mother made it, watching her in the kitchen all those years ago.

As I stood in the Manse kitchen, weeping as I cut the onions, I wondered how much we all have learned from our parents. In my case, 'Mackay's Shepherd's Pie.'

There must be more – well yes. My parents ran a Youth Club when we were all young and taught me how to play badminton. In places like the long beach in Montrose and the quieter bays in Rothesay, I learned to appreciate quietness, solitude. And it was my parent's faithfulness that brought me to church on a regular basis as I grew, fulfilling their vows taken on my behalf.

Life, it seems to me, is about passing on.

We learn from our successes and our failures, and we pass both on, teaching and nurturing our children, in the hope they become as good as they can be.

This morning, I want you to reflect on the story at the end of Deuteronomy.

Moses is taken up to the top of the mountain and is shown a panoramic view of the land that has been promised, 'but' says the Lord, 'I will not let you go there.'

I wonder if Moses was a bit frustrated.

Here was the man, now 120 years old, who according to the passage, 'was as strong as ever and his eyesight was still good', who had brought the people out of Israel and 40 years of wandering, dealing with complaints and the wishes, at times, to go back, looking at a land that he would not walk on.

And to these questioning looks to the Lord, I can hear the Lord saying the modern phrase, 'Don't even go there', suggesting that God did not want to discuss the subject.

Moses had done his bit, his job was done, it was now time to pass on the baton.

It was hard for Moses but it was a normal part of the process in the same way that we are in-built developmentally to teach our children how to live in the world and prepare them for the journey ahead.

Rishi Sunak is on record for commenting that 'we will be judged by our compassion and individual acts of kindness.' Some reports suggest that the consequences of a decade of austerity combined with the impact of the coronavirus have left the younger generation, known as Generation Z, 'scarred for life'.

Certainly in the Manse we are aware of the impact that not sitting the National Fives exams had, as well as a youngster leaving Primary to Secondary. As we know, in recent times, many youngsters have asked our generation 'what have we done to the world and what are we going to do to change it?'

In our families and in our church communities are we nurturing the dreams of our young people, the way we nurtured our own?

When we build the kingdom, when we try to take people on a journey to a place of promise, it is not for us but for those who come after. We need the wisdom Moses who, in reflection and conversation, realised that those who followed on would take the people in newer paths, led by God.

Moses never made it into the Promised Land, but from the peak he is able to look over the land. A lovely touch in this passage is the assertion that Moses still had 20:20 vision and thus was able to enjoy the view. Today if you climb Mount Nebo you find a plaque at the summit that points out the key locations the mountain overlooks. That is quite an amazing thought. It echoes again the theme of a vision being passed down from generation to generation. This takes place here. Moses dies in the land of Moab and the baton is passed to Joshua, son of Nun. The vision is passed from the elder statesman of the Israelites to the younger but still wise Joshua, on whom Moses had laid his hands and blessing.

A given chapter of the ongoing story may look very different to a chapter from two generations before but the vision is the same. How we continue to pass the vision of the gospel from generation to generation is the great challenge facing the Church today. We need to know it first, to share it and live it. Thus why I chose the reading from Paul to the Church in Phillipi. If there ever was a New Testament reading that emphasises this point, it is this one. One that speaks of running a race, running to the best of our ability, running with our eyes on Jesus Christ... and at the finishing line, passing the baton on to those who come after.

We pass the baton. We pass on the vision and then let the others run. They don't run our race, they run their own. When building a church community, we

have to recognise this. It is not for us.

It has never really been for us.

It has been first and foremost for God.

What we need to do is have that 20-20 vision, that Nebo perspective, that allows us to see from a distance the possibilities that lie ahead and make the correct decisions.

Some of these decisions will be hard. Excluding Moses from the next step was hard but sometimes in the Church when we talk about readjustment, spending to gain the benefits for the future, re-organising in a different slimmer but more sleek way, we too hear the phrase, "Don't even go there." "Don't talk about these things. I don't want to consider these suggestions, these recommendations."

Friends, we have to.

Friends we must.

If there is one task of a minister, it is to take his/her congregation up the mountain and show them the view but once you have the vision you cannot deny what you see.

It is to show you what lies in front of us.

It is how to get to the promised land.

It is to realise that we make the decisions for the glorification of God and not our own desires.

We need to run the race, then climb the mountain and see what Moses sees.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. AMEN

## **PRAYER**

"Don't even go there", we say, with arms folded in a defensive position and our minds closed to thoughts and dreams that might not be our own. You have taken us to the top but we have acrophobia, and we don't want to look down and out.

Sometimes...

...when we're paying attention...

...or when we least expect it...

...when we're looking...

...or when we're most unassuming...

...you show us something that we have longed to see.

We may be vigilant seekers,  
reading into the boring and routine or becoming excitable at the exciting;  
wanting to capture with precision and delicacy  
a moment that we discern is just for us.

We may play the fool, backing into a divine embrace;  
stumbling upon a transcendent promise;  
no less moved by what we have witnessed.

Regardless of circumstances, it remains that we've seen it,  
and it cannot be unseen.

You have made it seen. You have shown it to us.

You are the one who led us—willing or reluctant climbers—  
up the mountain.

You are the one who says to us,

"I have let you see it with your eyes,  
this beloved landscape of mine,  
this long-sought destination,  
this craved place of blessing and promise."

Now that we have seen it, what would you have us do?

Now that we have caught a slight glimpse or been given a lingering vision,  
we wonder how to get to the place you've shown us.

It is too marvellous a place to live without,  
too rich a source of life not to be shared, too wonderful a reality to be forgotten.

You lead us back down the mountain—willing or reluctant rappellers  
because there is more to see, and in one of your more clever twists,  
we have become the guides, the ones to show rather than be shown,  
the ones to help make it seen.

How best shall we move on from what you have shown?

Simply: forward, to be what we have seen for others longing to see it.  
"Go there," you say but that means letting go.

## **BENEDICTION**

With thankful hearts,  
for Moses and Aaron and Joshua,  
for their call to follow God,  
for the witness of generations,  
for the part we play in the continuing story of your people,  
we go encouraged to serve you,  
to seek to build your Kingdom, here, now, this week,  
forever.

Go in Peace,  
and may the Blessing of God Almighty,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be with you all.

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