



**Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church**

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 1 November 2020**

Dear friends

Welcome to another Sunday.

November has now arrived and as always I would like to thank all of you for getting us to this stage in the year. At last our children will be back in the buildings and the Church of some sort. Whilst they won't be in the Sanctuary, because of the limitation in numbers, it is great to know they are around us.

This Wednesday WD40 will take place again at 2pm under the usual restrictions. It is really nice, whilst we cannot sing like on a Sunday, to listen to both Razvan and Donald playing. I miss the singing but as we discovered, by actually concentrating on the words, the music really touches you, so to all our talented musical people, many thanks for what you do.

Next Sunday is Remembrance Sunday and even though the Order will have some similarities it cannot be the same as before. It is sensible for continuity to keep the service at 10.30am and mark the two minute silence as usual at 11am.

In our prayers we of course think of those affected by Covid, the killings in Nice, and the USA elections to name but three. Locally, we remember the funeral of both Margaret Greer which took place on Tuesday and Ewen Farrell whose funeral took place on Thursday. Sadly, I have to intimate the death of another member, Miss Sheila Tullett, who died on the 27th. Her funeral takes place on Friday 6 November at Clydebank Crematorium. The service will be streamed which will begin at 9.30. The link for the streaming is www.westreamitstreams.co.uk/tullett, and then follow the instructions. Will all Elders remember the virtual Kirk Session this Wednesday and the papers that have been sent out and respond accordingly.

Every blessing, every prayer,

George

Pentecost 23A Sunday 1 November 20 (Proper 26)

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: Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Psalm 34: 1-9; Hebrews 12: 18-24; Matthew 5: 1-12.

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:

740 For all the saints (v1-4, 8); 130 Ye servants of God; 179 Ye holy angels bright; 739 The Church's one foundation. 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.

Rest in His arms read, reflect, rejoice...

CALL

Let us worship the Lord
with Christians of every time and place.
Worship the Lord in faith.
For he is our constant and trustworthy God,
the same yesterday, today and forever.
Worship the Lord in hope.
For he is our saving and healing God,
who brings his people from darkness to light.
Worship the Lord in love.
For he is our generous and merciful God,
who blesses and nurtures all his saints.
Let us worship the Lord together
with joy in our hearts.

INTROIT

Jesus, stand among us at the meeting of our lives,
be our sweet agreement at the meeting of our eyes,
O Jesus, we love you, so we gather here,
join our hearts in unity and take away our fear. (SOGP 56)

PRAYER

Mighty God,
you are Father of a great family,
a family made up of people of every age,
drawn from the four winds and from every continent and island.
Your community transcends time and space.
Within your family each has a place in your love
and no one is neglected or overlooked.
Your care extends to every member
and every member plays a part in your perpetual praise.
Earthly and unearthly music blend,
nature and grace combine,
earth and heaven agree
within the orbit of your shining.
May we, with all your saints on earth
sing in concert with the saints in heaven.
Father forgive us...

Creator of the Universe,
our Maker and Preserver
we thank you for making us unique individuals,
able to find fulfilment in service and love;
for surrounding us with the great cloud of witnesses.
Help us to live in Christian confidence,
believing that nothing can separate us from your love.
These prayers we offer through Jesus
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God without end.

We make our prayers saying...

(The Lord's Prayer)

Our Father,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as 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 Matthew 5: 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

Almighty God, the trees are almost bare now, only handfuls of yellow leaves remain. The sun hugs branches it hasn't seen for a long time – we are yet not so open in prayer. Help us Lord to be ready, to be awake to receive your blessing. AMEN

REFLECTION

It would bring you to tears – the tiers.

Five levels, from zero to four, depending where you live. Infuriatingly, even at tier zero, churches are still restricted to 50 worshippers, so not a lot of thought has gone in there.

So, as I said, the restrictions make me rant and rave, the conditions make me cry, the tiers brings me to tears.

How we long to be back to where we were. Only last Sunday I was reminiscing with a member of our dear Kirk, that 2020 started off with a blessing at our



front doors, an old blessing connecting us with the wise kings who travelled and helped us look towards a joyful year.

Heaven forbid! That went well didn't it?

If only we had had an epiphany during Epiphany!

Whatever we described as a normal Sunday: children in the sanctuary, a cuppa afterwards and chat, oh the hymns, how we all miss singing as part of our tradition. A normal Sunday, leading to a normal week in a normal world.

We want to get back to normal.

We want to get back to the holiday destinations we missed; we want have friends for a meal; we want to be able to visit people in homes; have conversations with the whole face; we want to hug, cuddle and embrace because we know the value of human touch.

As one advert puts it of 'hands, face, space' - we want hands, we want to see and kiss that face, we want to invade that space, to end that feeling of isolation and separation.

Today is All Saints Day and the Gospel reading points us to the Beatitudes with Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount. I've read them again and these beatitudes are not instructions or commands. In many ways they are facts, facts about how God's world works.

They are God's normal!!

Like me we all have been hankering back to a 'normal' but Jesus' normal seems to be different from mine. In the Gospel Jesus tells us that the sad, the grieving, the hungry, the merciful, the persecuted are blessed.

They are the fortunate ones.

They are the lucky ones. They are the ones closer to God's normal.

They are the ones who will inherit the earth, be filled, and be called God's children.

Let's go back to 'normal'. What is normal? I remember, when young, thinking that the way my family functioned was normal. There was a mother and a father and a family; going to church was normal; not using bad language was normal; meat and two veg was normal.

When I got older I realised that not everyone went to church, family structures were different, meal times were different and the English language had words that I had never used.

If we are honest, even as adults, the world around us is not necessarily normal. We live in a part of the world that is wealthy in comparison with the rest, we live in a world where selfishness, greed, looking out for number one is not unusual: whilst meekness, mercy, mournfulness are for the most part ignored, a world where 'this is my right' is a normal cry.

Jesus recognises that our 'normal' and his 'normal' are different.

And you can see this because he looks to the future and speaks prophetically. He says, 'Blessed... (and) ... for they will be...'

God's kingdom is here but lies in the future as well.

Similarly, in All Saints, we recognise those whom have gone before us, that connection, that communion between those who have tried to follow Jesus' words on the Mount, the present and the future.

Normal – what is normal?

When you suffer, mourn, hunger – are you fortunate? Do people in these situations actually believe they are or is this just a cop out and an excuse to say 'what are you complaining about, you are blessed'.

When we watch the TV and see a girl walking for miles for dirty water, when we step round the homeless in our city streets – how do we feel?

Do we see them as blessed or are we ashamed? Do we find them embarrassing and undignified. In our normal are we content to look down on them and say 'you only have yourself to blame'?

What we have to remember is that Jesus spent his time on earth trying to end suffering, he sat down with those he names in the beatitudes. Jesus' ministry is about healing and wholeness.

Eventually, we will return to normal.

A vaccine will be found.

We will put the face masks away.

The hand-sanitisers will be pushed to the back of the cupboard.

We will be back in other people's houses and out in restaurants for meals.

But something in me will be frustrated that we haven't learned – that the 'normal' isn't good enough and that how we behaved certainly at the beginning of the pandemic was more in line with Jesus' words in the Beatitudes. Many of us prayed not for the 'norm' but a new normal – Jesus' teaches us what it is.

Will we go back to the way things were in the church, in our lives, in the world where much is centred on privilege or will we really realise that to be blessed we need to be filled by God?

The tides will end but my tears might not.

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

AMEN

PRAYER

Working night and day for you God,
it is quite a challenge.

To give our whole selves
valiantly, nobly,
courageously,

to the cause of Christ –

we are not sure that's what we signed up for,
preferring to be a passenger than a pilgrim,
not coming hither but asking whether?

As we think on the hours we have committed to you,
we remember in this season,

all who have laboured night and day
through generation to generation:

from these earliest followers of Jesus

who held and carried the torch into the darkened Greco-Roman world,
the Corinthian church,

those in Ephesus and Thessalonica;

to those Reformers who saw the need to change.

As we enter November, Lord,
we remember the Saints who gather around us and we are grateful :
for friends who made us laugh so much,
parents and grandparents with the lessons it took so long to learn,
siblings, holding our shared past,
mentors, with particular wisdom.

We see the people who come to mind every day,
and the ones who pop by occasionally,
we notice the people who left us with scars
and others who were easy to love.
We carry all their legacy with us,
for the grace – or pain – that came through them,
we are grateful, and also grief-filled, resentful, lost.
Today,
we are here because of those who have given their all to you Lord God,
who have sown a seed, let faith flutter
spiralling like sycamore in the wind.

To those who have nailed their colours to the mast,
dared to hammer theses on Wittenberg doors,
who have fought the fight
and ran the race.

Feeling the saints around us
may we receive the blessings we need.
For all the saints in our lives
in heaven and on earth,
we make our prayers.
AMEN

BENEDICTION

Grant us new understanding
where old understandings
will simply no longer suffice.
Go in peace...
and may the Blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you all.
AMEN