



Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 24 January 2021**

Dear friends,

Welcome to another service.

It's hard to believe, but this is the 2nd last Sunday of January. Still we wait for the virus to lose its grip and the vaccines to be rolled out across the country. Things through the winter are still tough, so hang on in there: keep going; you have done so well. Not only is there a light at the end of the tunnel but a light within it that warms us and shows us the way.

As intimated last week, Joey MacDonald's funeral took place in North Uist and Ella Queen from Broomhill Drive at Maryhill, both on the Thursday. Please keep the family of Alex Hutcheon in your prayers. His funeral will take place on the 8th February.

A reminder that the articles for our Newsletter, are due this Sunday: Carol and Jill will be delighted to see them. It's not in the Newsletter but I wondered about the possibility of 'Coffee and Chat' on Zoom? Wouldn't it be nice to sit with our own coffee and see the well-kent faces? Just a thought: you can tell me what you think.

It was great to see Junior Church by Zoom last Sunday, using break-out rooms as well, as they thought about the Lord's Prayer. However I was praying afterwards and couldn't get the computer to connect with our Zoom service and had to take the service on my mobile.

Excuse my lack of Christianity but I cheered when, on Thursday night's 'The Chase', a Celebrant was knocked out by the Governess. She had the audacity to say that people choose Celebrants to conduct a funeral rather than the Clergy because 'they are more personal'!! You should have read some of the posts on that I receive on Facebook afterwards from ministers!!

It made me think though.

Not personal? Are we not living and celebrating the Good News in our lives?

Take care.

Every personal blessing.

George

***Remember our helpline number, 07851 591 503,
if you are needing help with shopping through this time of Lockdown***

Sunday 24 January - Epiphany 3 (Year B)

For those who like to follow all the lectionary readings for the Sunday, the readings for this Sunday are: Jonah 3: 1-5, 10; Psalm 62: 5-12; 1 Corinthians 7: 29-31; Mark 1: 14-20.

For those who miss the hymns I have added them in here. The congregation in Naseby and in Kingsborough, 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:

458 At the name of Jesus; 533 Will you come and follow me; 644 O Jesus, I have promised; 680 You are called to tell the story.

Our Sunday reflection will be based on Mark 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

To the fisherman Jesus said:

"Follow me" and I will make you fish for people.

To the tax collector Jesus said:

"Follow me."

To the rich man Jesus said:

"Go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."

At the Last Supper Jesus said:

"Follow me."

To you and to me and to all of us Jesus says:
Follow me!

PRAYER OF APPROACH

Jesus calls us o'er the tumult,
above the din and distractions of our world,
the disagreeing and discordant sounds,
he calls us by name.

The word of the Lord comes
calling us out of our comfort zones
to where his ministry
and ours lives;
to where the grace is needed most.

Father forgive us,
for our comfortable lives
convince us that we do not need to follow Jesus,
that 'following' is just an option.
Our work provides for our wants,
so we have no need of your grace.

Our friends are found through social media
so we do not need your community.
Forgive us for dragging our feet as disciples,
Compassionate God.
May we rise and step out in faith.
May we go to the difficult places to bring hope.
May we proclaim with our lips, but especially our lives,
that the kingdom of love is near,
brought by Jesus Christ,
our Saviour and Lord.

(The Lord's Prayer)

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

Let us turn to God's Word, found in Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 and Mark
1: 14-20

'This is the Word of God. Thanks be to Him.'

And now some music as we contemplate the readings.



PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Compassionate God, all creation delights in the radiant presence of your Word.
May the authority of your Spirit bring understanding and clarity to our minds
and truth to our troubled hearts, that we may praise and serve Jesus Christ our
Lord. AMEN

REFLECTION

'Techno tantrums'. Do you know what that is?

Yes, it's living in this digital age and with children who take electronics as a normal part of their activity, and the fight to get them off the darned machines! For those with children, or grandchildren, what devices do you use to get them off their devices?

I think back to my childhood and the games we used to play. Remember 'kerby', where you threw a coin towards the kerb and the one nearest was the winner? What about climbing trees? Climbing dykes in backyards? Kick the can? Ringing a doorbell and running away? And in school, in the playground with the opposite sex, 'Kiss, Cuddle and Torture'?

You must recall that game, running around in a form of 'tig' and if you were caught you had the choice of a kiss, a cuddle, or some sort of torture like nipped in your arm, hair pulled, ears twisted, your arm punched?

You might think that after being on-line throughout the day, especially under

current restrictions and home schooling, the last thing you would want to do was to sit at a computer to relax, but my son reminded me that I come from the 'boomer generation' and don't understand.

Let me bring you back to that playground game of being caught – kiss, cuddle and torture and relate it in some strange way to the Gospel reading of Mark. In our reading, Jesus invites well seasoned fishermen to leave their nets behind and follow him to 'catch people'. The picture that Mark paints is a fishing analogy, understood by those by the lakeside. For those who heard the story and heard the words of Jesus it was rooted in the culture and language that they knew best. It made sense to use a fishing metaphor for fishing folk. Nowadays, the suggestion that the church has 'its hooks in you', is a very negative one, indicating no freedom of choice; an evangelism of force.

The disciples were called to use the gifts that they had been given: of intuition, intelligence, heading into deeper experiences for the world.

Even though I don't like the 'hooked' part, the church as a whole has failed to take the missionary aspect seriously. Following Jesus is just that but we have turned it into a belief system rather than one that affects and changes our living. If I could use that playground game to emphasise the point... that when we are 'caught', we make a choice between 'kiss, cuddle or torture.' The 'kiss' suggests to me something on the periphery, a peck on the cheek, lips brushed on each other at best.

The 'cuddle', perhaps an attitude towards the faith that 'embraces' much more and the 'torture'- self explanatory, to follow Jesus completely, to go where he goes and never be the same. The church is changing, we know that and unfortunately, for the most part, numerically, it's downwards. While I don't like the hooked-on Good News, we are not bringing people into the life and heart of our church community. It is a bug-bear of mine but in the past our buildings were used for church activities but now there is a financial reliance to fill our halls.

That might, on the surface, be 'good for the community' but it has very little benefit to the church, to the growth of the kingdom and to following Jesus. As the Principal Clerk said from our very own pulpit, 'we are not a club'. Whatever way you understand 'catching people' we are not very good at it. We are not called to entrap or ensnare people but we are called, like the disciples, to know the water we are in. We are called in the lives we lead, the occupations that take up so much time, the families we are part of – there is where we 'fish'.

We often trot out that this is not 'the Scottish way' and that as a people we are reluctant to express our faith openly. We are taught that conversation killers are politics and religion and so in social occasions we don't talk about the 'church.'

This is the 'kiss' of the playground game... but it is not a game.

In a changing world even the church has to adapt. We have to trust that what is important to God is that He prizes our intellects, our memories, our backgrounds, our skills as people and as a church community, and that these gifts will help that community grow and multiply. The promise to 'follow' is not about severing and undoing the lives that we lead, but to cultivate, nurture and tend where we are.

Where are we honestly in that calling, in that catching? Kiss? Cuddle? Torture?

The church, now and again, skimming the surface?

The faith that encircles much of what we do?

The commitment to live that faith and share that faith all the way?

Gordon, our Session Clerk, reminded me that 2019 was the first year he could

remember having no baptisms Now, for additional reasons, 2020 has been the same. Where are the days when families lined up in front of the font and children were baptised one by one? And following that on, where are the children who were baptised, committing themselves to follow?

Kiss, cuddle, torture.

Go through the motions.

Believe some things.

But change your life? Change others??

The pandemic will come to an end eventually, sooner or later, and the Church will look at how it has coped and also the damage that's been done. Some, who only 'kissed ', will have walked away: whilst others who 'embraced', will be tired but uplifted by the work that we, locally, have put in and there will be others who will keep on going, giving their all because that is what they believe they are called to do: to build up the Kingdom of God and follow the man from Nazareth.

Can I encourage you to consider the words of Jesus and to what 'follow' means.

We sit in the West End of Glasgow now trying to maintain who we are, the presence in the community. That is only part. We have to be missionary. We have to realise that we have a message to share, a story that so enlivens our lives that others are drawn to it more fully, and a Saviour who makes a difference to who we are.

"Will you get off that PS4!" I say to my children.

"You are old school. This is a new generation," is the reply.

It is a new year, a new time but the calling and the mission is the same – it's not a game.

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

(As we do in the sanctuary, we make our offerings of body, mind and soul, as well as in a monetary way.)

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God,

we ask you to bless the gifts we give this morning.

We ask that that you help grow the trust in us,

that we might follow without looking back

and that we might leave behind more of our old lives

to experience more deeply new life in you.

Help us to leave our nets on the shore,

leave those things that seemed essential

before we heard the call,

so that we might travel the road you have put before us.

In the name of Christ who goes before us

and beside us, we pray. Amen

(We turn to our world)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God, you call us,
and sometimes we duck under the table,
hoping that you didn't notice us when you walked into the room.

You call us...

and sometimes we just grab a stack of papers
and a stapler and try and look efficient, trying to be busy in the moment.

You call us...

and we look around believing it to be someone else
and then say when the penny drops,

"Who me?"

and sometimes

we just say, 'No!' forgetting also that you call us to be ourselves
in the places where our very self is needed the most.

You call us,

and like a parent calling us home we, like children, ignore the call,
wanting 5 minutes more, a longer time to do what we want to do.

Give us grace and wisdom

to say 'Yes,' to your call,
reminding us that to follow is not a belief but an action,
a way of living the Kingdom.

'Calling', Lord,

is not a 'once in a lifetime experience'
but an everyday every moment event.

Remind us that this is so.

AMEN

BENEDICTION

Now, take the word of God into the world.

We will place hope in the arms of others.

Now, take the word of Jesus into the world.

We will follow to serve beside him in all the broken places.

Now, take the word of the Spirit into the world.

We will bring others near to the kingdom where all are welcome.

Go in Peace...

... and May the Blessing of God Almighty,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

be with you all.

Now, go and serve the Lord.

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