



Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church

"Lighting the Way"

for Sunday 14 March 2021

Dear friends,

Welcome to another Sunday service, on this the fourth Sunday in Lent and also Mothering Sunday.

Thanks to all who are participating in the Junior Church 21 for 21 challenge. Junior Church are doing well, introducing a warm up and even demonstrating exercises on their Sunday Zoom! Some members of the congregation have asked for details of the exercises so that they can follow the exercise plan too. If anyone else wishes to try it, and I'm sure you do, just e-mail or phone Victor on victorcraig@gmx.co.uk or 07979703287.

If you wish to donate, supporting in that way:

<https://www.justgiving.com/team/BroomhillHyndlandJuniorChurch>
or cash or cheques to Lilian Murray, 102 Randolph Road, Broomhill G11 7EE,
cheques payable to "Broomhill Hyndland Junior Church."

Though our Kirk Session meets this week and still have to agree the service times recommended by our Worship Committee, you will be aware of the changes announced by the Scottish Government of the relaxation of the rules.

Besides the Holy Week evening services by Zoom, we are hoping that the Naseby Park Sanctuary will be open for 50 once more on Palm Sunday with a Zoom at 7pm and we are aiming to stream our Easter Sunday service. Please bear in mind things may change. However, that means the booking system will return for Palm Sunday.

For Facebook users, we have been placing the readings on our page on a Monday not just for you to be aware of them but to read them over and take part in a discussion.

Please try and have a go: we can all learn from each other.

It is Mothering Sunday and in our prayers we should remember the forthcoming funerals of Cathie Cuthbertson and Elsie MacDonald this week. It is also the anniversary of the Dunblane Primary School killings so our thoughts also go there too.

Next Sunday, Kevin Cannon, who has entered the Discernment Process, will be participating with us in Zoom as I am his Presbytery Assessor.

Can I, as always, wish you every blessing this Sunday

George

Sunday 14 March- Lent 4 (Year B)

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: Numbers 21: 4-9; Psalm 107: 1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2: 1-10; John 3:14-21.

For those who miss the hymns I have added them in here. Sunday's hymns are: 392 When I survey the wondrous cross; SGP 21 Christ's is the world in which we move; 187 There's a wideness to God's mercy; CH3 550 Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim.

In the Zoom services you'll find the words on the screen – so, in the safety of your own home, sing along!

Our Sunday reflection will be based on Numbers 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

Hope nonetheless.

Hope despite.

Hope regardless.

Hope still.

Hope where we had ceased to hope.

Hope amid what threatens hope.

Hope with those who feed our hope.

Hope beyond what we had hoped.

Hope that draws us past our limits.

Hope that defies expectations.

Hope that questions what we have known.

Hope that makes a way where there is none.

Hope that takes us past our fear.

Hope that calls us into life.

Hope that holds us beyond death.

Hope that blesses those to come.

MUSIC FROM RAZVAN

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND LORD'S PRAYER

O God of Comfort and God of Challenge,
we come to you this morning the way the Israelites did,
full of complaints and dissatisfaction.

Nothing is enough;

we do not recognize your blessing

at work in our day to day lives.

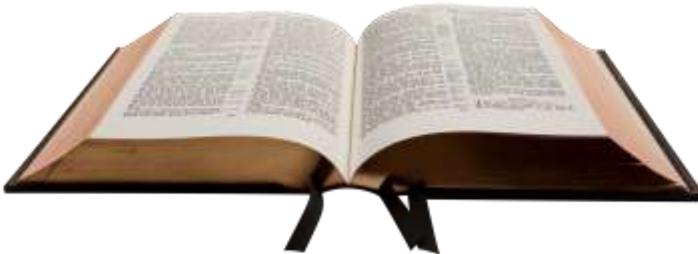
Forgive us when we become so comfortable
that we moan and groan about
the most insignificant details of our lives.

In our complaints,
challenge us as you did the Israelites,
to consider the bigger picture
of oppression, injustice,
and inequality around us.
Forgive us
when we close our eyes
for fear of what you might show us.
Holy God,
teach us to be patient.
Instruct us to be grateful.
Guide us to be responsible and humble.
As we turn ourselves around and look to the cross,
let us experience your grace and your gift of new life.
In the name of Christ our Saviour, we pray.
In Jesus Name and in his words...

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 Numbers 21: 4-9 and John 3: 14-21
'This is the Word of God. Thanks be to Him.'

...and now a hymn to sing along to, as we contemplate the readings.



PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

For the love of God in Scripture; for the Word of God among us; for the Word of God within us – thanks be to God. AMEN

REFLECTION

Over the past three Sundays of our Lenten journey, I have asked you about Temptations, Promises and Anger- they are attempts at an inward look, as we move forward to Holy Week and Easter.

This morning, I want to ask you if there are lines that you wouldn't cross and I ask you in relation to the news that broke on Monday: to that now infamous interview with Oprah Winfrey. I discovered that the surname 'Markle' actually means 'boundaries'. I thought that interesting, of a couple who wished privacy, one sort of boundary, and the interview in itself, which crosses boundaries and for some, over lines, that others would not tread.

In some ways, all three previous reflections ask the same question-

-when Jesus is tempted by the Devil, would he step over the line and give in?

-when we make promises, would we break these promises and step over the line?

-when angry, surely there are opportunities where the emotion takes us over the line?

In fact, it doesn't need to be anger, it could be jubilation and the reaction of 'some' Rangers supporters last weekend to the joy of winning the Premier League, breaking Covid rules.

Don't say I didn't offer congratulations!!

I want to concentrate on the book of Numbers this morning and the Israelites in their journeying too, in the desert. In this part of their travelling, they have lost their patience and have started to grumble and groan again:

"Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?" they moan.

Their grievance and their protest is one of a long line of whinges which even for God becomes the last straw. In the past, God has answered with kindness and compassion and long-suffering care.

When the Israelites complain about water, God instructs Moses to sweeten it;

-when they grumble about being hungry, God provides them with manna;

-when they cry out with thirst, God instructs Moses to strike a rock and produce an abundance of water;

-when they despair for meat, God sends a flock of quails.

This time, God is not so forthcoming or benevolent. According to the story, when God hears more whining, he sends poisonous snakes into their midst and the serpents bite them. As some die, they relent and repent and God instructs Moses to make a pole with a serpent on it and instructs the people to look at it and they shall live.

Now of course, we know there is a connection between this 'pole' and the cross that will be raised up on Good Friday and if you read the passage from John's Gospel and the meeting of Jesus and Nicodemus, you will find the reference there.

'Just as Moses lifted the serpent up, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.'

'Look up to what is killing you ` God is saying in the Old Testament passage – look at what is harming you, breaking you, poisoning you, killing you. For the Israelites, it is their inability to trust God, the God who has delivered them from Egypt out of slavery, sustained them in the desert and promised them a new land.

Let me go back to the original question, how far would you go before you cross the boundary and cross the line?

For some, Meghan Markle knew what she was marrying into, an institution and a way of life that most of us would not choose. She knew that there were rules, regulations and protocols to be followed, a line of duty, first and foremost. She knew where the lines had been drawn.

For others, her revelations about loneliness, isolation, thoughts on suicide, comments on race, need to be heard, spoken about, revealed – and so the lines are crossed.

'Look up to what is killing you', admit to what is pulling you down, open up to your feelings. This is not just a Harry-Meghan question. In many ways it's a Lenten question in the same way the temptations, the broken promises, the anger, are all questions we ask about ourselves on this journey to the cross.

If we 'do' Lent right, then we ask these types of questions, we face our hurts and the hurts we've caused, we cross the boundary and then look up to that which is pulling us down. For we know that when we look at the cross, as John was implying, we will do the same again, for true healing to take place. There, in the boundary of city and hill, there between the boundary of death and life, Christ Himself will cross over.

We used to sing, 'Looking upward every day, sunshine on our faces,' but this is a different type of looking up. When you survey the wondrous cross, what do you see? What do you think of?

What do you need to let go of?

What revelations do you need to share with God Almighty about who and what you are and might become?

Of course the reflection is not about Meghan Markle or Prince Harry.

However, the Old Testament story recognises journeying, complaining, division between the ranks and the need to look inwardly, look outwardly, to look up at our behaviour however we see it and interpret it and seek healing.

Boundaries are also there to keep us safe. In truth, that's what the Ten Commandments are there for: not to beat us or berate us but to show us the right relationships to have and to seek them to the best of our ability. I presume that Meghan did not like the boundaries that were placed on her to be part of such a Royal Family.

Today is also Mothering Sunday.

It's a Sunday where, in tradition, worshippers returned to their 'mother' church. Some of you might remember that on one such Sunday, we stood around the periphery of the sanctuary and held hands as a sign of being gathered in. Those who have played a part in our lives, especially youngsters, have also set boundaries. There may have been times when our 'complaining' reflected the story of the Israelites and we too stepped over the line and criticised too.

However you read the chapter in Numbers, we all have to look up that which brings us down and also lifts us up. That's what Lent is about. As to the news of a mother on one side of the Atlantic and a grandmother on the other, we hope looking up brings reconciliation and healing and ends the soap Oprah.

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

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Great and generous God,
our lives are surrounded by things
that steal our lives, afflict and destroy us.
The offering we share with you this day
is a way of keeping us focused,
not on the things that would take life away
but on those which will renew our lives: hope, love, compassion, empathy.
As the Israelites looked to a serpent on a pole for healing,
we look to a Saviour on a cross
to be brought back to life.
In that holy name, Jesus the Messiah, we pray.

AMEN

(Think about the ways you might make an offering to God this week)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Mothering the Holy One,
embracing infinite vulnerability,
in meditation,
Mary gazes into the mystery,
the impenetrable darkness,
Eternity's eyes.

Exhausted,
sated with love,
she weeps at the suffering to come,
sees the end, the broken Christ,
where now He lies, crying.
She sheds the tears of a thousand, thousand mothers.
In that cave, Love is born.

Maternal God,
you conceive us,
give birth to us
nurse us,
smile at us every day,
protect us,
feed us,
give us words to say,
show us how to walk,
cheer for us in our successes,
wipe our tears when we fail
encourage us,
dream big for us,
and love us for who we are.
When we entered this world as tiny babies,
you gave us caregivers,
who watched and waited on us,
who fed and clothed us,

who taught us how to live.

We pause in this moment of silence to give our own thanks
for one special person who has changed our life:
for their work, and their love which has shaped us,
we give you thanks!

[Silence]

We pray today for caregivers,
mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers,
aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters and cousins,
neighbours and family friends,
all who care for children.

Give us the wisdom we need to do this work!
Open our ears and eyes to the real needs of those in our charge;
open our hearts and hands to meet these needs.
Give us endurance, and patience and hope,
and above all compassion,
treating each child as we would want to be treated.

You know us, God:
you know that there are places where we have failed as caregivers.
We also need your help to mend broken or strained relationships.
We need forgiveness, we need closure.
Grant us peace in our relationships.

Our prayers are also directed today for caregivers
around the world who face special challenges;
for those many caregivers
who are caring for orphans from different tragedies;
for caregivers who are without food,
walking long distances with children in their arms;
for caregivers in war-torn countries who are trying desperately
to protect their children from bombs and guns.
So many dangers in this world, Lord,
and you know them all.
Bring peace to our troubled times,
justice for those who are oppressed,
hope to those who are hopeless.

God, you love us with a father's love,
you care for us more tenderly than any mother,
you are the Great Caregiver.
Help us this week to be aware of your love,
your gaze upon us,
encouraging us, sustaining us,
directing us.

AMEN

SENDING HYMN

BENEDICTION

Just as God's Word was sent into the world
to heal and redeem,
so God sends you into the world this day
to be light and love, healing and hope.
Go now to be light for the world!
And may the grace and peace of God the Creator,
the Redeemer, and the Sustainer
come upon you this day
and remain with you always.
AMEN

... AND MUSIC ...



Junior Church during their Zoom exercise meeting last week

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