



**Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church**

“Lighting the Way”

for **Sunday 20 June 2021**

Dear Friends,

Welcome to another time of worship. On Tuesday past Robert Hynd was installed as the Moderator of the Presbytery of Glasgow for this year. I am quite sure Robert would like me to thank those of you who joined on line to watch the proceedings. I would also like to put in writing, recorded also in our Kirk Session minutes, our thanks to the sterling work John Boyle has done over the years as a Presbytery Elder both for Broomhill and our new church, Broomhill Hyndland. John's knowledge of fabric in particular, although he has served on other Presbytery committees, has been invaluable. As he steps down from that role, he will be missed by many far and wide in Glasgow.

The annual 'Glasgow, the Welcoming City' service of worship takes place on line this year on Sunday 27 June. Access details are available via <https://glasgowchurches.org.uk/>.

This is also the end of Refugee Week and today is World Refugee Day as we remember those seeking sanctuary from troubled lands. The Presbytery noted, '... with respect to the UK Government's "New Plan for Immigration", as a Presbytery committee we were pleased to hear that the Church of Scotland had been a signatory to two open letters: one to the Prime Minister and the other to the Home Secretary, expressing deep reservations and calling, for example, for an asylum system which is effective, fair and humane instead.' For, as the Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, convener of the Faith Impact Forum, has put it so well, 'we need to call out this policy for what it is - xenophobic populism which exploits people's fears of the outsider.'

The Presbytery World Mission Committee reported on the Diocese of Hyderabad, 'A prayer appeal was circulated last month. The pandemic has had devastating effects financially on the Diocese and its work. However, they rejoice in confirmation of their EAD approval which enables funds to flow freely from support international sources. They have also launched a free clinic for the poor in Mirpurkhas and are providing 20 scholarships for Christian students with the support of Barnabas Fund UK.'

In our prayers we should remember the work of Mediterranean Hope based on the island of Lampedusa, with the tension around the highlighted refugee activity. Also in our thoughts is Claire Herbert, Chaplain to the Lodging House Mission, in hospital for a second time. Locally, we remember the friends and families of both June Watson and Sheila Proudfoot, whose funerals take place next week.

Every blessing this Father's Day,

George

*Bookings for 27 June are open next Friday from 10am until 3pm.
Telephone 07851 591 503. Each week thereafter please phone to book.
Although seats should be available, we still need your details for the
Scottish Government's Test and Protect.*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 22 June Funeral of June Watson in Naseby Park Sanctuary (if you want to attend, please telephone 0141 576 2067 for a place).
23 June WD40 (Kingsborough) 2.00pm
24 June Funeral of Sheila Proudfoot
27 June Morning Worship and the Baptism of Daniel Lee
30 June Graduation Service (Kingsborough) led by the Moderator
4 July Morning Worship (Naseby)
5 July- 21 July Minister's Holidays
11 July Morning Worship led by John Boyle
18 July Morning Worship led by Mat Morton

Sunday 20 June – Pentecost 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: 1 Samuel 17: 1a, 4-11, 19-23, 32-49; Psalm 133; Job 38: 1-11; Psalm 9: 9-20; 2 Corinthians 6: 1-13; Mark 4: 35-41.

For those who miss the hymns I have added them in here: 485 Dear Lord and Father of mankind; MP 250 Timeless love: we sing the story; 535 Who would true valour see; 517 Fight the good fight.

Our Sunday reflection will be based on 1 Samuel 17 and 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

The winds raged
and the disciples trembled.
Goliath taunted
and Saul tasted fear.
Enter Jesus
Enter David
staring beyond the fear
daring us to do the same.
The winds will rage
and giants will taunt
and fear will weaken our gait.
Still Jesus
Still David
offer a challenge
not limited to wind and bullies
but beckoning to the heart of the timid.

Staring beyond the fear
focused on the greater power
daring us to do the same.
Let us worship God.

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND LORD'S PRAYER

O voice of calm,
speak to us this day
in the stillness of this place.
Soothe our souls,
pacify our petulant behaviour,
take from us the strain and stress
as we meet to praise you once more.

It feels like madness
to stand before the giant
with nothing but faith and a few small stones.
It seems insane
to believe that anything but brute force
can match the challenge of the powerful.
But, in the stillness
in the calmness,
in the peacefulness,
a different voice whispers,
speaking of crosses and empty tombs,
of justice and God's concern for the weak.

In the stillness, fear and insecurity can be heard
in the bellowing of the bullies.
And in the stillness the temptation in each of us
to cling to our power at all costs
becomes clear and transparent.

And so we find ourselves once again in prayer, Jesus,
that the gentle persuasion of your cross
may change how we do power in our world,
that the strong and wealthy may find life
in sharing and empowering,
and that we each,
in our own small way,
may remember
that our storms are most often stilled

when we allow your authority to lead us
and your justice to teach us how to live.
In your name we pray...

(The Lord's Prayer - together we say...)

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 principally in 1 Samuel 17.
'This is the Word of God. Thanks be to Him.'

And now a hymn. Choose one from our opening page...

MEDITATION

To leave the safe sheltered quay;
to rest while strong men fear;
to doze through a storm at sea:
 who is this Jesus?

To display the might of the meek;
to sleep while threats are near;
to dream while fierce gales peak:
 who is this Jesus?

To know what keeps you afloat;
to let another hand steer;
to be safe in a foundering boat:
 who is this Jesus?

To be seen when there's no light;



to trust when nothing's clear;
to confront the powers of night:
 who is this Jesus?

To speak the word that saves;
to know God is even here;
to command the wind and the waves:
 who is this Jesus?

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, wellspring of all that is. You are the sea in which we float; you are the wind that fills our sails; you are the storm that buffets us; you are the calm that brings us peace. Open our ears to hear your word; open our eyes to see your beauty; open our hearts to be warmed by your love. Free us from our fears and selfishness, and make us over, day by day, bearers of your peace. AMEN

REFLECTION

I am writing this / have written this on Thursday – my usual day of sermonising. The day is important because tomorrow Scotland travel down south to face England, the 'Auld Enemy', in the second match of the Euro championships.

Scotland made a pig's ear of the first game, where I could have saved the second goal and now their opponents are a stronger, let's be honest, and more skilful team. As you know, I follow the lectionary and the prescribed readings set for each Sunday but I couldn't have chosen any other passage than the story of David versus Goliath.

The task facing the Scottish team in many ways is a usual one.

It is an uphill struggle.

It is a frightening prospect.

It is the story of an underdog.

And so is this famous Old Testament story of the battle lines drawn between the Israelites and the Philistines. Two armies are in a standoff: probably chanting at each other, singing their national songs, 'sending them homeward to think again', 'Can you hear the Israelites sing, no, no' and something about the year 66, or when the last battle was won!

The Philistines had two advantages: iron imported weapons and the biggest 'centre half' you have ever seen, Goliath, three metres high and great for crosses. Saul, wisely, refused to engage with the enemy because like any wise king or coach, he knew that they would get slaughtered. So his tactics were as defensive as you could ever get, not to put a team out in the first place!

Then, as we know well from the story, in comes the boy David, who had been sent for provisions for his older brothers. He enters our story witnessing the terror that faces the underdogs. He hears the taunts, the victorious commentary before anything has commenced and then, in a remarkable sequence of events, he becomes the only one on the battlefield willing to take on the giant, using not an ill-fitting armour that is fit for a king but a sling and a pebble and a belief that

others had forgotten about...

... the belief in the power of God.

The underdog wins... (did that happen on Friday ?)

It doesn't need to be Scotland versus England, but the story of David and Goliath serves a similar purpose for the first people who wrote it down, the reporters at the match so to speak. They were trying to record to help the Israelites who had been taken into exile, driven from their land and their home destroyed. This story, and stories like it, were written for a community in despair, a people trying to understand what had gone wrong, what the future held and even questioning where God was in these horrendous events.

In answer to these types of questions, the scribes recalled this famous battle where one side threatens to make mince of the other. They tell the story of the options King Saul has: send someone to battle Goliath or hope that they get bored and go away. Morale is low and fear is high.

David appears – and he sees it from the most important perspective, he remembers the most important thing of all, that the rest of the soldiers including his brothers have forgotten – that they are the people of the living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God who has brought them out of Egypt, the wilderness and to the Promised Land.

David refuses to let the Goliaths of the world define his people: he shows them a different way and we need to hear this famous story because when the Goliaths of our world take over we need to see that there is a different way.

When the things we fear, not just an English defeat or a failure to qualify but illness, loneliness, unemployment, COVID, financial ruin, whatever: when these fears grow until they are an impossible size, hijacking our imagination and our inability to see beyond today or even this moment, we need to focus on a different way. Likewise, where the Church is at the present time where downsizing, pruning and planting become the operative words – we need to believe in a different way, stepping back like the Israelites to understand what lies in front of us...

... and trusting in the power of God who has led his people from generation to generation.

The story answers the very human question of what happens when fear seem to overwhelm hope: an individual question, a community question, a nation, a church. What David did was to remember that God is faithful, God is present, God equips us for what lies ahead.

David remembered God.

When faced with fears, especially the gigantic ones, it's easy to let them take over, overwhelm you, suffocate you. What we always need to hold dear is that God holds us dear: His love on us and His claim on us is far greater than any fear. In this time of change, change in our world and in our lives, how do we 'do church'? We need a God-dominated imagination.

Remember also that David faced very human experiences throughout his life – he wasn't always as successful as with the pebble that hit the forehead of Goliath. David will be chased by Saul, his best friend will die, his wife will be taken away, his infant son dies when he is king, there will be conflict and tragedy in his family and he will face a coup from Absalom, who will be killed by David's own men.

David's life will show success and failure. He will show himself as a flawed individual in desperate need of God's guidance, God's grace, God's promises, God's love –

just like each one of us.

David will not always be the underdog and after times of trouble there is a line from the house of David which leads to a Jewish prophet who has taken our fears on, carried them beyond to a future prepared for us. This is a God who walks the hills and also the valleys, knows the ups and the downs and fought for the underdogs all his life.

This is a Saviour who can calm the storms and the fears and encourage us to 'be still' and 'be calm' even when life is overwhelming us or drowning us.

This is Christ, who knows more than anyone about 'glorious failures' but had the greatest victory of them all!

As I finish... I wonder how the underdogs will do and whilst another David, Marshall, in goal couldn't catch a cold, I remember that Jesus saves!

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

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Living God,
take our bodies
and let them work for you;
take our minds
and let them dream for you;
take our hearts
and let them beat for you;
take our spirits
and let them soar for you.
AMEN

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

O God,
if only we could lift a pebble,
take a sling
and defeat that which faces us
and frighten us.
O God,
if only our aim was true
at that which terrifies us and fill us with trepidation.
If only we believed we could slay giants
like poverty and hunger;
if only we believed we could slay giants
like prejudice and hatred;
if only we believed we could slay giants
like conflict and bigotry.
If only we could slay giants
like loneliness and homelessness;

if only we could slay the giants
of COVID and other diseases.
And if only we could stand tall like giants
in our grace and care for each other;
if only we could stand tall like giants
in our acceptance and support
for one another,
if only we could stand tall like giants
in our forgiveness and justice
towards the other;
So may we love:
may we stand beside friends and family,
the sick and ill,
the newly baptised and the oldest,
the stranger and the seeker,
and know the strength of love between us
and the possibilities that lie therein.
So be it. AMEN

BENEDICTION

May God give you strength
to face any giant.
May God persuade you
to meet them with grace
and may what no longer fits
be left behind:
your armour being rather that
of love and truth.

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

AMEN

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