



**Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church**

“Lighting the Way”

for **Sunday 22 August 2021**

Welcome to another time of worship.

It is with particular delight that, as the schools return, we rejoice in our children of Junior Church back in the Sanctuary. My thanks to the staff and helpers, when we were actually allowed the children in the large hall only, who kept the connection with the children a live one. So I am excited to have them back in the pews - another step in the right direction.

Our Church Magazine is now out in print and email. The pictures are super, reminding us of what Summer in Scotland could be like.

In our prayers this day please remember Afghanistan and Haiti in particular. Last Sunday the theme of the service was 'wisdom' but I wonder, in the light of events in Kabul, how much wisdom has been used as that country changes dramatically and radically.

Locally, please remember the Yip family, after Wai Yip's funeral on Tuesday; the Anderson family for Colina Desport's funeral on Thursday; the Walker family, with the death of Alexa Walker on the 14th of August and Christine Limond as we remember Robert.

My thanks to those who support our Church work throughout the week in many forms, like Gordon Smith who kindly played at our WD40 service.

No more bookings but when you are in our Sanctuary, but please remember your details for Test and Protect.

Every blessing,

George

Church Magazines for September are available for distributors this morning, or collect your own from the Vestibule. Those who receive communications by email will continue to do so, but if you would prefer a printed copy please help yourself.

Sunday 22 August – Pentecost 13 (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 Kings 8: 1, 6, 10-11, 22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84; Psalm 34: 15-22; Joshua 24: 1-2a, 14-18; Ephesians 6: 10-20; John 6: 56-59.

Sunday's hymns are: 52 How lovely is thy dwelling place; 530 One more step along the world I go; 465 Be thou my vision; CH3 481 Stand up! stand up for Jesus; 175 Praise, I will praise you, Lord.

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

CALL

M: The sparrow finds a home

All: here in your house.

M: The swallow finds a nest

All: here in your house.

M: The smallest ones find a resting place

All: here in your house.

M: The weary ones find a refreshing spring

All: here in your house.

M: And with them, we worship you.

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND LORD'S PRAYER

Ancient of Days,

Holy Mystery,

El Shaddai...

God, we call on You by the names we have,
taking on our lips
words that cannot contain You.

You are always more and as we turn to You,
You have already turned to us
and called on us:

My people!

My beloved!

To wait before You
and meditate on You –
this is what restores us.

To know again
that You are the Living God –
this is what reawakens our hope.

So we gather in Your presence
and offer You our love and thanks
for keeping the world turning,
for infusing all that exists with the breath of Your Spirit,
for looking on us with warmth and pride
because we are Yours.

Gracious God,
You know us well.
We are not always at our best.

Sometimes we get weary,
our smiles fade, our energy runs low,
and in a depleted state we become bad company.

Sometimes we fail to look after ourselves
and blame others for our unmet needs.

Sometimes we despair that our good work
does not count for much and we retreat into paralysis.

Hear our sorrow and untangle us, good Lord.

You do not condemn;
You forgive.
You do not create lost causes but human beings in Your own beautiful likeness.
Recreate us today for Your love's sake.

We pray in the names of Your Community of Love –
Source, Saviour, Sustainer.

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 Ephesians 6 : 10 - 20
"This is the Word of God. Thanks be to Him."
And now a hymn. Choose one from our opening page.



PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Open our eyes this day to your presence: that we may know you; that we may dwell in you and be aware, that you are in us. AMEN

REFLECTION

There's something nice about a siesta!

There's something nice about an afternoon nap.

You know the kind I mean. Abroad, when the sun is at its highest, all the sensible French, Spanish or Italians head indoors. They recuperate and then as the evening cools, the shops are open, and couples and families stroll along the pedestrian areas, window shopping.

It's, 'mad dogs and Englishman that are out in the midday sun'.

My Gran used to say, 'Give me five minutes, I want to rest my eyes', in the afternoon or early evening. We call it, 'forty winks,' or a 'wee nap' but the idea behind it is just the same, we are tired. I have to admit, there are times in the day when sitting down is a bad move – and I wake up with a crick in your neck and some coffee on my trousers or the couch because I just suddenly nodded off!

I have watched the news this week about Afghanistan, and in truth I am tired of the worries in our world. Soldiers who served there, especially those scarred in many ways to their experience in Kabul are broken in spirit, their anger, frustration and their strength taken away from them when observing was happened so quickly after 20 years of offered support.

'I want to rest my eyes.' Yes, I say that too.

Soldiers, politicians, the public: feeling the blood draining from them, in a part of the world that feels abandoned. Strength speaks of power. Strength speaks of independence: of vigour, of ability, of dynamism, of growth, of the ability to cope with many things.

In my vocation I have watched and admired many people who have coped with so much; who have shown remarkable resilience even when life has dealt them a poor hand. We can sing about 'strength' about the Church but in reality, we are anything but. For many outside the churches, strength is the last word that many would use of us. People point to derelict former places of worship or carpet warehouses in what were church buildings. The number of clergy seems to get less and less. Many congregations feel themselves burdened by costs.

Paul writes to the Church in Ephesus, 'Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power'. We can't turn a blind eye to the reality of change, but we shouldn't be cowed by these pictures of weakness. We are still 'the early church' and God isn't finished with us yet. Our picture of where we are is determined by our own perspectives and experience – but it is God's perspective that ultimately counts.

If we feel ourselves to be burdened by change and out of touch;
if we feel the connections are too often missing between faith and daily life;
if we feel sometimes that it is all too much and that we are too weak for the task, and our energies are on the wane, then we have already made the first step to the recovery of confidence.

We've realised that it's not our abilities, not our preferences, not our inadequacies that count – but God's own strength. 'Be strong in the Lord,' says Ephesians.

If we know ourselves to be weak we may know for ourselves the graciousness of a God who shares himself with his people. We've already taken the first step towards overturning the arrogance of human power.

Do you remember the story of David and the giant Goliath – the slip of a lad who came out to fight the great warrior? He couldn't wear King Saul's armour because it was too big and heavy for him. So he went out with nothing but a pocket of small stones and the power of God. In other words, he left behind the armour the world would provide and took only the armour God provided. We are called to be Davids – to leave aside worldly power and to step forward lightly and free of encumbrances. Don't be cowed: God's power is more than enough.

I look at Afghanistan and I think of worldly power. The West withdraws its 'armour', its physical presence and another worldly power steps in and the work of these past years, to open up possibilities of fairness, justice, education goes down the drain.

And all I have to offer, my strength – is not my own.

So yes, there are times I rest my eyes.

I look back at a time when my mother needed more help and my sister, God love her, said to Pam and I, 'I'm not a young woman anymore.' She was in her fifties! I have, or I should have a bus pass, if I would admit it; and in the Manse two teenage children. I take my boy to football training and his teammates say, 'The old man is back to coach us,' and I turn round because they cannot be talking to me!

I pull muscles quicker than I ever did a girl on the dance-floor, my back is sore sitting at a computer writing this sermon, and I cannot open a jar but that's because I'm left handed – if you believe that?

Where is the strength I had as a boy? Where is the staying power that allowed

me to read all night and write an essay in the early hours of the morning for University?

We are back to physical strength but the strength that Paul speaks of, is not like that.

It doesn't depend on physical powers.

It doesn't depend on intellect.

It doesn't depend on stamina.

It doesn't depend on ability –
it depends on God.

I rest my eyes. I rest my eyes because I worry for Afghanistan and Haiti. I worry in lands that burn and lands that are dry. I worry for those who ride on unsafe craft in the English Channel, fleeing somewhere anywhere for a better life.

And when I pray, I am tired: tired of never ending stories, that bring sequel after sequel. But Paul tells me, tells you, to put on your Gospel armour, an armour that others might mock but where our strength to help us through life really lies.

'Put on your Gospel armour, each piece put on with prayer.'

We can't solve the world's problems on our own. Some would say, we cannot solve the world's problems full stop. What we do for Afghanistan, the Middle East, city-wide in Glasgow, in our own community here, we do in God's strength.

'I want to rest my eyes' and I want open them to newness with the God who holds me up.

Glory be to thee Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. AMEN

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Holy Spirit,

we invite you here among us

as we meet to nourish

and challenge our faith,

so that our faith nourishes us

and challenges us

for our life in the world.

Help us to think and pray

in our getting and spending.

Bring your order to our owning.

Guide our giving

and provoke in us the desire above all

to see your kingdom here on earth

as it is in heaven. AMEN

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

I have said it often,

in frustration,

irritation, in anger,

'God, give me strength !'

It is a prayer, short and snappy,

borne out of exasperation,

but I really do pray for strength.

Transforming God,
ever at work among the poor,
the humble, the weak and the lowly,
teach us to live not by our values, our strengths, but by yours.
When we feel feeble, useless, powerless, in our world,
incapable of meeting the challenges before us;
when we feel our resources are too small
and the demands put upon us too great;
when we feel we can achieve little
and so set limits on what you can do through us,
teach us not to live by our values
God, give us strength.

When we look around and see no signs of your kingdom,
when problems in our world seem many and the answers few,
when hope seems futile and despair justified,
when truth and love appear overwhelmed
by falsehood and hatred, teach us to live by your values,
God give us strength.

God who brings change help us recognise that you can use
what seems small in our eyes beyond our imagining,
that from the smallest beginnings
you can bring the greatest of results.
Use us.

Teach us not live by our values but by yours.
We put on our Gospel armour in your strength
we pray. AMEN

BENEDICTION

As we go from here,
may God go with us
Keeping us close,
keeping us connected,
keeping us a community of faith.
May God bless us in the days ahead,
Deepening our trust,
encouraging our hope,
amplifying our love.

Go in Peace... and May the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you all now and forevermore.

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