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**Broomhill Hyndland  
Parish Church**

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“Lighting the Way”

for **Sunday 8 August 2021**

Welcome to another time of worship.

Can I begin by saying what a super Sunday afternoon was had at Karen and James' wedding last week - weren't they stunning! My thanks of course to the Cleaning Team who, after the morning service, cleaned the Sanctuary following the guidelines so that the wedding could take place.

As the guidelines ease, particularly from tomorrow, we, as a church will continue to be cautious, aware of the anxiousness of some as we encourage our congregation back to Sunday worshipping.

The Worship Committee have shared their views with me regarding the use of Hymn books and the consensus is that the hymns should be displayed on the screen to encourage us to keep looking upwards. Hymn books will be available for those who would prefer.

At the close of worship today we are trying two different tea fellowship methods: one is to continue to remain in the Sanctuary and the other is to be seated in the small hall.

Our next Church Magazine, covering September 2021, will return: the deadline for contributions is noon on Sunday 15 August.

The Kids' Club, which meets in the Novar Drive Halls, are looking for a few more helpers - perhaps, two or three times a year. If you can help, speak to Jane Stephen. More information will be contained in the upcoming Magazine.

Every blessing on this holy day,

George

***No more bookings! Please just come!***

***We will be asking for your contact details for the Test and Protect Scheme once you are seated.***

**Sunday 8 August – Pentecost 11 (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: 2 Samuel 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130; Psalm 34: 1-8; 1 Kings 19: 4-13; 2 Ephesians 4: 25-5:2; John 6: 35, 41-51.

Sunday's hymns are: 485 Dear Lord and Father of mankind; 490 Jesus, lover of my soul; 540 I heard the voice of Jesus say; 606 Lord, you sometimes speak in wonders.

Our Sunday reflection will be based on 1 Kings 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**

We meet here with every doubter and every questioner.  
We meet here with those who celebrate and those who mourn.  
We meet here with those who wait and those who long.  
We meet here with the hungry and the lonely.  
We meet here with the rich and the poor.  
We meet here with all your people ready to worship just as we are.

## **PRAYER OF APPROACH AND LORD'S PRAYER**

Holy God, your power is displayed throughout the universe,  
throughout our world,  
right down to our very selves and our everyday lives.  
For you, all things are possible,  
and we know with you that these words are true.  
For you are our refuge and our strength,  
and we confess, like Elijah of old, we prefer the refuge to the strength.  
Our spirits are willing, at least normally willing, or sometimes willing.  
We know what you have called us to do—we hear the words 'Follow',  
we know what to do but the flesh is weak.  
So we come to you for refuge but we confess we are hiding:  
hiding from the hard path,  
hiding from the earthquake, wind and fire  
(or using them as an excuse)  
hoping that you will reveal another path, another direction,  
a hill easier to climb.  
Forgive us, O God, and fill us again with strength.  
Make us strong and courageous, ready to do your will,  
trusting the words we say about you are actually true:  
that you will never leave us nor forsake us, and that with you,  
all things are possible, that we are sufficient with your grace,  
that you will lead us to an abundant life for all,  
if only we will leave the safe confines we choose and into the streets  
of this world that you love.  
May our forgiveness fuel our faith  
and make us anew into your Body here on earth  
We ask in the Name of Jesus Christ...  
saying together:  
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 1 Kings 19: 4-13  
'This is the Word of God. Thanks be to Him.'



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

## **PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Believers, complainers, compelled and hungry, come now to the Bread of Life and live eternally. Hunger and thirst no more, but be raised up by the bread that came down from heaven and live forever as a child of God. AMEN

## **REFLECTION**

I am not an Olympics fan, I have to admit.

I am too football-orientated and I'm still celebrating the Italian Euro win and Hearts beating Celtic last Saturday! Other sports are further down the pecking order but since the news has been displaced on BBC1, some of the Olympics were on the box when I was about.

Like the cycling. Jack Carlin I baptised in Paisley – was it that blessing he received that made him cycle so well? I'll take the credit, but what really impressed me was the little British girl at the skateboarding event, young Sky Brown at the princely age of 13, who won a bronze medal.

Her skating is mind-boggling. It is eye-popping, a whirlwind of 45 second hand plants, nose grinds, aerials, leaps and twists, spins and flips. It is acrobatics at one hundred miles an hour. What impressed me so much was that she had fallen twice attempting the same trick, third time around, she tried it again, she made it and moved into third place.

Last year, which adds to the admiration, she had a bad crash when attempting a trip on a mega-ramp. It left her with multiple fractures in her skull, lacerations to her lungs and stomach and a broken arm.

I have never skate-boarded but it does leave an interesting picture in your mind, of your minister skating down Clarence Drive, gowns shifting in the air, blessing people as I passed by and shouting, 'Weeeeeee....'

Let's push that image to the back of your mind, if you can...

... and think of Sky falling and trying again.

... think of Sky and her accident the year before and her parents, in her interests, trying to persuade her that Tokyo and this sport was perhaps not meant to be.

... think of Elijah, fleeing for his life, hiding not just from Jezebel but from himself, contemplating the very human decision that we are all programmed with – fight or flight. He is running from his past, and when he is woken by an angel who gives him bread and water to eat, he has to make a choice to run away from or run to. To the words, to the question, 'What are you doing here?' Elijah, exhausted, recognising his failings, has to decide to take flight or fight.

We have all been there, I imagine – flight or fight.

I can recall running along the beach in Tenby, Wales, on a karate course and then being instructed to dive through people's legs into the sea. As someone not confident in the water, I wasn't keen. Fight or flight?

I can remember leaving the back door of a primary school to escape a bully and

saying to myself, 'Enough is enough,' because I spoke politely, went to Church and supported Hearts.

Some will remember the horrible boss, the demands placed on you, treated like a minor, the dogsbody and the decision to face up to the treatment.

Don't get me wrong, though Elijah chooses to fight, there probably have been times in your life when walking away was the better, healthier and wiser option.

Every time a Church heads to union there is the fight or flight mode: some choose to embrace the new times with open arms: others take the opportunity to change churches, to give up on their faith because it is not the way things were.

When Sky Brown stepped off the lip and then down the slope and high in the sky, in the background the Stones Roses' song, 'She Bangs the Drums' began to play and as she rose up that first curve the words of Ian Brown rang out –

'Kiss me where the sun don't shine, the past was yours but the future's mine.'

How is that for a positive way to look at the days that lie ahead, not just for a youngster but for a National Church in the midst of change, for we too have the option of fight or flight. We too, can coorie away like Elijah, not liking the way things are going, hiding, tired of arguing over everything, when like Elijah, you thought you had done your best: or rest up, eat up to the sustenance that God provides you and look forward to the next challenge.

To the call of God to, 'What are you doing here?' your response could be 'the past was yours but the future's mine.' It's an old story, not just the Elijah one, but the one that keeps on harping back to the olden days and it seems to me, that when we do that, we are choosing the flight mode. Unlike the Jewish nation that recalls past events over a meal to highlight God's involvement with them, we tend to look back and depress ourselves, failing to see God in the present.

It's a bit rude, but there is a wish to at least mumble the words, 'Kiss me where the sun don't shine' because I get a bit pig-sick to those who hear the words 'Wake up and eat' and like Elijah, then lie down again and have to be woken up a second and a third and a fourth and fifth time.

'What are you doing here?' can be asked in several ways. It can be asked as the relaxations continue and for some, still caught inside, reluctant and frightened to face the world outside. God knows why we are here on a Sunday, to give glory to His Name but if he sees us hiding, if he is asking us to wake up and he is also asking us what in earth are we going to do as a changing church in a changing community and world.

And the answer will not be to hide from the future.

It will be, as it was for Elijah, an utterly-life changing moment, a profound re-making of his prophetic calling and identity. It will be, as it was for Elijah, a God who sees our utter weariness to change, to Presbytery Plans, to uncertainty in the world we live in, who comforts us as we despair and who nudges us to "Get up and eat" because the journey will be long, and the journey will be hard, to get us where God wants us to be.

What are you doing here?"

Well, what are we doing?"

Flight or Fight?

Hiding away on our hourly Sunday service and our private devotions, reciting our creeds, until like Elijah, we say, "I am the only one left" or continuing to build in

a different way in the wilderness to the Kingdom of God.

As the prayer suggests:

We are tired, Lord.

Weary beyond thinking about it.

Weary, over praying through it.

So weary: worn of words,

no glimpse of glory,

so weary, we have had enough.

We've no idea the road ahead,

we've not been this route before.

No way is coming clear,

just... wilderness,

enough to lose ourselves.

And the only path we easily find,

is the one of least resistance.

Yet there's energy to run, and keep running,

to avoid and evade,

to distract, and deny,

to turn and to tilt... away.

Can we be found, even so?

When we get there – when it's 'enough',

and there's nowhere to go but there,

and nothing to have, but what we receive:

shelter us from the searing sun,

shield us from the scratching wind,

save us from the time of trial.

Feed us this day, the bread for tomorrow

crumbs to sustain us,

morsels of grace,

a few winks of sleep,

drops of refreshment,

just enough.

Even so.

Fight or flight? The answer is clear.

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

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Patient and Merciful God,

we hear your call to live in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.

Our ears hear these words in our worship;

our minds know what they mean; our hearts long to follow them;

but we know that tomorrow we will be tempted to slip into the familiar life

where we ourselves are at the centre of our world

and the needs we focus on are almost entirely our own.

In our giving this day, help us strengthen our resolve

to love as Christ loves us,

for it is in the name of Jesus that we pray. AMEN

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

God, you have gifted us this sacred earth,  
given to be co-creators to look after it and care for it  
but this sacred earth wails with fragility, unstable, seen in earthquakes.

Strong winds also blow, trees fall, branches rip,  
homes are damaged and debris strewn.  
Fire rages across the land, swift and sharp  
as the slice of shimmering steel;  
scorching and shocking as words spat in heated haste.  
Earthquake, wind and fire.

Lord, we do not need these happenings to run away;  
we do not need fires out of control stinging and burning;  
storms and gusts that bring destruction ;  
foundation and people shaken by plates that move underneath our feet;  
there is much that we flee from and look for escape.

Like Elijah of old we can run but we cannot hide:  
from decisions that have to be made;  
results that shock us into silence;  
health issues we find hard to accept;  
behaviour that lets us and you down.

It might seem wise to take flight  
but that which we run from travels with us –  
but so do you.

As you give us bread for the journey  
help us remember that the bread that sustains us through all trials,  
earthquake, wind, fire and the storms of our own lives,  
is the Bread of Life himself.

Your presence with us always, just as Elijah found. AMEN

## **BENEDICTION**

God's arms in the solitude; God's hand in the crowd;  
God's word in the silence; God's whisper in the noise;  
God's voice in the darkness; God's echo in the light;  
God's calm in the conflict; God's rhythm in the harmony;  
God's help in the possible; God's hope in the impossible;  
God's touch in the breeze; God's kiss in the raindrops;  
God's comfort in the Spirit; God's love in your life.

Go in Peace, and may the Blessing of God Almighty  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Be with you.

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