



Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church

"Lighting the Way"

for Sunday 16 August 2020

Dear friends,

Another Sunday, another service. Welcome once more as we now are in the middle of August and the children have returned to school, in some kind of form. To the school day much has changed: John Luca was in on the Wednesday and the Friday, Francesca on the Thursday and certainly in Jordanhill, to prevent too much movement of pupils, there are double period classes as the children's timetable changes.

I thought back to my school days (no, not the one with slates and chalk) but the teaching ones. Will I ever forget these dreaded 'Please Takes' where, when you thought you had a period for preparation and marking, the Depute Head would come round and hand me a slip to take a French class!

Jill will be sending out with the Reflections, our own 'Please take' which has been produced by Gary and the Communications Committee and the Health and Safety Team. In the letter there is up-to-date information regarding the steps we are taking to open our Naseby Sanctuary, and how to book a place. 'Please take' the time to read it carefully. I am sorry that we are not all back worshipping in the way I would like but we are under restrictions and have to follow these.

'Please take' the time to realise the effort that has got us to this stage and support the work as best you can.

In our prayers this week remember the horrendous situation that has developed in Hyderabad in India; the Beirut explosion; the train derailment at Stonehaven, Covid 19 and the stresses and strains of the pupils with their exam results. 'Please take' time to remember all those to God, the God who takes time with us.

George

Pentecost 12A Sunday 16 August 20 (Proper 15)

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: Genesis 45:1-15; Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Psalm 67; Romans 11:1, 2a, 29-32; Matthew 15:10-28

Our Sunday reflection will be based on Matthew but please read and ponder the suggested Scripture and see how it connects and what it says to you.

.... read, reflect, rejoice...

CALL

Love is... offered to one and all.
Love is... stronger than hate.
Love is... willing to learn and change.
Love is... brave and bold.
Love is of God and God is love.
Let us worship the one who loves us
and be prepared to share that love with one and all.
AMEN

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

INTROIT

The Lord's my Shepherd I'll not want
He makes me lie in pastures green
He leads me by the still still waters
His goodness restores my soul

Chorus

And I will trust in You alone

And I will trust in You alone

For Your endless mercy follows me

Your goodness will lead me home

He guides my ways in righteousness
And He anoints my head with oil
And my cup it overflows with joy
I feast on his pure delights

Chorus

(Stuart Townend)

Welcome to our time of worship in homes and in hearts.

PRAYER

Loving God
hear our thanks
for the places and moments
that welcome us
into your realm.
The meeting places
the holy places
the thin places
the invitation to find you
and speak of you.
God
guide into these places
where we can speak of your love
introduce your way
to those who have lost their way.
Lead to the moments

where opportunity lays
to speak of love
to live in justice.
Shape the spaces
where we might say yes
to those whose lives
have always said no,
even though we believe
that they are welcome.

Loving God
may we always have eyes
to recognise these places
and join the great company of heaven
who have found the lost
spoken to the lonely
and loved the unlovable.
The world is full of places and spaces -
may we step into them
and find welcome
for all,
no matter who they are,
for they matter to you.
In your name we pray and in your words saying...
Our Father... AMEN

And now we turn to Scripture, to Matthew 15:10-28
Let us listen, read and hear the Word of God ...

... this is the Word of the Lord, thanks be to Him.



PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

God's power to guide me, God's might to uphold me, God's eyes to watch over me, God's ears to hear me, God's word to give me speech, God's hand to guard me, his way to lie before me, his shield to shelter me. AMEN

REFLECTION

"You are like a dog with a bone" – how often have you heard this phrase?

"You won't let things go."

It's a phrase that speaks of determination. It is one of persistence and an unwillingness to stop until things are finished. Hercule Poirot was like 'a dog with a bone'. The dirty-raincoat detective Columbo was like 'a dog with a bone'. You may be saying to your spouse or your partner to let things be, to let bygones be bygones, and move on but 'she!!' refuses to give in.

There are lots of comments that we could make about the highly-controversial and disturbing reading found in Matthew's Gospel today.

Much has been written about the humanity of Jesus, challenged by the unnamed woman, changing his mission from the children of Israel to the wider world.

Earlier this week, after the exam results fiasco, the text prayer sent around referred to 'perfection'. I thanked God, in the prayer, that I wasn't perfect, that it wasn't all grade A's because perfection meant no change, no new learning because you had nothing new to learn. Here, in this Gospel story, there is wonder about 'perfect' Jesus – that he never messed up, never changed his mind, never made a mistake and never said he was sorry.

The problem is, of course, that the 'perfect' Jesus does not exist.

Remember the Christmas carol we sometimes sing 'no crying he makes'!!

Really? Jesus is fully human as he is fully God, which explains his outbursts and his table throwing at the temple precincts, as well as his outburst at the woman because he is authentically us.

Someone once said that the day you can longer change is the day you stop being a human being. Jesus changes. What about we, as the church? Have we stopped changing? Have we stopped being relevant to those on the outside? Have we stopped relating, forgetting our humanity?

Many scholars have tried to dampen down Jesus' words suggesting his use of the word 'dogs' refers more to the way those of you who are dog owners may comment on them but I wanted to concentrate on this persistence and ask you, 'How far are you willing to go?'

I watch the news of the increase of migrants putting their lives in danger attempting to cross the Channel from France to Britain and wonder how far they are willing to go to find a new life, to find any form of a decent life, by crossing and then claiming asylum in the UK.

I listen to stories of mothers in particular who live off breakfast cereals to make sure their children have something like a decent meal.

The Syro-Phoenician woman in the story I have great admiration for.

What she teaches me is that persistence.

In a world where the headlines are devastating: the global pandemic, the recession, an ailing planet, the explosion in Beirut, flash flood and lightning strikes and train crashes – to get through this we need persistence. Let me go back to an earlier comment – Jesus' humanity.

In amongst all our angst the Good News is that Jesus is one of us.

He allows himself to explore the depth of what it means to belong to God and by being open to prejudice and aware of the blind spots that we all have the Gospel opens up to Jesus and ourselves in a fuller way. Affected by this particular time and place a human encounter takes place led by a woman who will not give in.

Think of the number of couples who have headed abroad to try and find a cure for an illness, or a drug that is not prescribed in the UK. Hopeless it seems to many, fruitless, even a waste of time and money and a denial of medical advice – it is that kind persistence, it is that kind of 'dog with a bone'.

Which leads me to at least ask the question, 'How persistent are we with our faith?'

Sure, we will fight tooth and nail for our youngsters, for a cure, for an answer to the Steven Lawrence murder case but what about the faith that teaches us to learn, to change, to develop, to grow and to challenge that which is not right in our world? How much boundary-breaking, taboo-busting, bridge-crossing are you willing to do?

She cries 'What about me?' The table is for all – how persistent are you going to be, to change you own perceptions, the church community, the world?

Will you be like a dog with a bone?

The Good News is good for us.

But is it Good News for everyone? Is it Good News for those with Covid? Is it Good News with those who have to shut shop literally? Is it Good News for those on the dole? Is it Good News for those recovering from injury or facing bereavement because they were travelling from Aberdeen to Glasgow in a storm?

If it is not then we need to be more persistent.

We need to be like a dog with a bone.

Are you brave enough?

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

PRAYER

Sticks and stones may break our bones...

... but words...

our words,

our deeds,

our lives,

build barriers and walls

between us and you, Lord God.

Words, Lord, you know

can be harsh and hurtful

separating rather than drawing together.

Words fracture relationships

even though all are called to the table.

Father, forgive our divisive words,

our put-downs,

the catty comments

the fly remark to make us look good.

Help us learn, as you did, from conversation,

from relationship,

from the to-ing and fro-ing, from the learning of each other's needs.

It is not the crumbs
but the fullness of your grace that you give at the table.
When you spoke 'Let there be light' creation burst forth;
when you said 'Come closer' you invited humanity to live closer
in the Eden-dewed garden;
when you gasped in glory 'It is finished,'
the Word took on new life
and spoke of a greatness beyond words.
Guide us with our words,
guide us Living Word,
that we break down barriers,
jump the obstacles
that we learn to love
with words and actions.
AMEN

BENEDICTION

Now go, to serve as God's people.
We will work to remove all that divides us from others.
Now go, to share the grace of Jesus.
We will love others just as we are loved.
Now go, to be the Spirit's community.

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



Whose house is this?
(Last week, it was Brenda Stewart)

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