



**Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church**

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 22 November 2020**

Dear friends

Welcome to another Sunday service and, as you will know, due to being moved into level 4 by the Scottish Government our Sanctuaries are closed once more and the Zoom service moves to 10.30am on Sunday.

The Newsletter, which will indicate what services we are planning over the Festive period, is due out this week but please continue to check the Reflections, emails and Facebook for any changes, particularly as we come out of level 4 which is planned for December 11th.

You will also find in the Newsletter information regarding the Olive Tree charity that we support every year in the Kingsborough Gardens Sanctuary. Liz Davidson is happy to take orders for anyone looking for gifts or stocking fillers but she will be unable to deliver the gifts until after 11 December. Please see the Newsletter to find more information.

Our Trivia Night Quiz is coming soon on 5 December. Remember to sign up for the event. Amanda set a test question on Thursday on our Facebook page and I was accused of cheating - nothing new there then!!

Many thanks to Julie leading worship at WD40 last Wednesday and of course everyone there for making her feel at home.

In our prayers we have to note the deaths of Sheila Milne from Erskine Home and Margaret Steven from Clarence Court. Please remember at this time.

Every blessing, George

**Last Sunday of Pentecost - Christ the King
Sunday 22 November 2020**

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: Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1: 15-23; Matthew 25: 31-46.

For those who miss the hymns I have added them in here. The congregation in Naseby and at WD40, whilst unable to sing them, have enjoyed following the words; giving them an opportunity to think more of what they mean and how they tie into the theme of the service.

Were we in Naseby on 'Christ the King' Sunday we might have been singing - 459 Crown him with many crowns; 443 He is Lord; 185 (CH3) All poor men and humble; 458 At the name of Jesus.

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.

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

CALL

We come, for God gathers us here
with that community called faith;
where the hungry are served first;
where the thirsty drink life's water.

We come, for God welcomes us here into that home called grace;
where the naked are clothed in robes of hope;
where the stranger is embraced as the long-lost prodigal.

We come, for God reunites us here,
sisters and brothers in that family called love;
where the imprisoned model justice;
where the sick are cradled in God's peace.

INTROIT

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own.

Awake my soul and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity. (459)

PRAYER

Let us pray.

You are that man, Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the Most High God, and friend of sinners;
you are that man, Saviour of the world,
King and Head of the Church.

All glory, laud and honour be to you, redeemer king,
crucified Lord of heaven and earth.
For you are risen and ascended, reigning in highest heaven;
and present with us now.

As we draw near to you in spirit and in truth,
that we might worship and adore you,
Lord God, Father, Son and Spirit,
we would confess that we have not always loved you,
nor loved our neighbour;
we have not always trusted your teaching Lord Jesus,
nor obeyed your word,
nor let you reign in our hearts as king.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

We have let possessions be more important to us than people;
we have been more interested in promoting ourselves
than in bearing witness to your kingdom;
we have asked for your forgiveness without being willing to forgive.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

We come before you Lord God, Father,
that we might be set free from all that would come between us and you,
all that would spoil our lives, and the lives of others,
and the life of the world.

We lay our sin at the foot of the cross, and ask that in exchange,
Lord Jesus Christ, you grant us your grace.

For we believe, through your word Lord God,
that your love is from everlasting to everlasting,
and includes us; that our lives can be transformed;
that Christ is willing to dwell within us, and rule our unruly wills,
and reign in our hearts.

For you alone can put us right and grant us peace.

Be for us Lord Jesus a hiding place from the wind, a shelter in the storm;
be for us, O Holy Spirit, rivers of water in a dry land;
be for us a shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Come Lord Jesus, as we come to you now,
reign in our hearts,
reign in your church,
reign in your world.

Hear this our prayer, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(The Lord's Prayer)

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

And now we turn to Scripture from Matthew 25:31-46

Let us listen, read and hear the Word of God ...

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

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

All poor men and humble (CH3 185)

ILLUMINATION

Quiet all the other voices clamouring for our attention, so that we can hear
yours. Secure us in the lush, green pastures of your fold. Nurture us at your
table of grace. Restore, strengthen and heal us, Holy God. AMEN



REFLECTION

Look at the picture.

The world sculpture was created by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz and can be found when the mad rush happens and we move out of level 4, mid-December, to fill our shopping bags with last minute presents and Christmas cheer.

There, in Mandela Place, just off Buchanan Street, at the back of St George's Tron Church the shrouded anonymous figure can be found – but the wounds on the feet imply Jesus Christ.

Appropriately for this Sunday, the sculptor named the man 'Matthew chapter 25' "truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of my brothers you did it for me."

Yes, the feet give it away...

... but the hidden face suggests that this figure could be any one of us.

Today is the last Sunday of the Pentecost Season, called Christ the King Sunday, a liturgical hinge from the ending of the long Pentecost season and ordinary Sundays to the beginning of Advent and the waiting for a child to be born. This child will be anything but a king. As we look forwards through the Christmas season we will be aware that the child to come will be born homeless, his first cries in a cattle shed.

Look at the picture again... and compare it to your mind's image and the Christmas card scene on many a Christmas card to be received.

A hungry Jesus.

A homeless Jesus.

A naked Jesus.

Royalty that stoops.

A vulnerable Jesus. This has been an interesting year – an understatement – and in this year the church has felt very vulnerable. Buildings have been closed, numbers have been limited, the normal rituals and social occasions have ceased.

The pandemic has forced us out into the world. The virus has put us in line with the rest of the world. Covid, in a strange way, has put us, in our vulnerability, more in touch with the man who lies on the bench: more in touch with Jesus.

It is variable but some churches have flourished, reminding themselves of house churches in the early years which were the norm. We, I believe, as a congregation have listened in a deeper way because we all have 'come as strangers' in this, the strangest of times.

We have appreciated the world more, the outdoors, the breath of fresh air, the beauty of nature. Limited, we have cherished moments and that limited experience has taught us about those on the street whose lives are limited.

Look at the feet again... and recall what we have forgotten, that Jesus lived in the periphery of society, he was a fringe dweller. On a conference last Wednesday, whilst Julie was leading worship so successfully, I heard the line 'newness emerges from vulnerability'. When we are vulnerable, nothing is certain and when nothing is certain we are closer to the community that we have come to serve.



I wonder what will happen when restrictions are lifted and there is a mad dash to see family and friends for 5 days? Will there be a 'couldn't care attitude' to those who are our vulnerable neighbours? In the same way there are those who flout the rules, refuse to wear masks, breathe on the back of your neck in a queue. Is not our king, even now, lying sick in a hospital bed struggling to speak? Is not that child to be king seeing his business close, unemployment looming?

Is Jesus, aware of his vulnerability, awaiting an NHS appointment that has been cancelled and might never come?

Matthew chapter 25 is about vulnerability – and this year has made us all vulnerable... and perhaps, perhaps, has taught us how to be better Christians.

I fear that as a vaccine is found we forget the message from the wounded healer and try to re-capture where we were. Instead, ask yourself what God is teaching you in this past year? Where is he calling you to and importantly, shut out from buildings, where is he calling you from?

Here is the king who will emerge red-face, bloodied, crying: who will go through his short life washing feet, eating with the rejected, hanging on a cross in the fringes and on the periphery of city walls.

"When did we see you?" the righteous will ask.

"When did we see you as we phoned for a space at church?"

"When did we see you as we started, briefly, to open up our halls?"

We have domesticated our faith and by trying to be secure and wind and watertight we have walked past the Christ in the world. It is not that we meet the king by caring for the vulnerable – he is the vulnerable. Eventually, fearful though we may be, we have got to come to the reality of the question that Jesus asks –

"Whenever you did it for the least... you did it for me."

The final judgement doesn't ask you about doctrinal creeds, orders of service, hymn singing, well-maintained buildings – the bottom line is about compassion.

We are about to walk into the darkness of Advent and have our candles lit in preparation for the child-king. A king in swaddling clothes will emerge and turn the world upside down.

Look at the picture... the person huddled under a blanket is Jesus.

The person on the pavement in a cardboard box with a dog at their side is Jesus. We wait... and we look... but we do not see him in our midst already.

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

AMEN

PRAYER

Create a throne room for yourself here, O Christ,
but let it be the empty seat beside the anxious;
the lonely chair next to the confused;
the vacant pew next to the hungry,
and reign, O Jesus,
as sovereign over the forgotten.

May your reign be a mockery to the world
but good news to those who seek out truth,
and may we join them in the search;
finding you walking the streets;
or breaking bread; or sitting by bedsides.

May we find you in border areas
on the edge of things, on the periphery, on the fringes;
crossing over with the foreigner.

May we find you among children; learning to finger paint
as teachers to those who long to enjoy life again.

May we find you with the worried,
silenced with nothing to say and space enough to keep it.

May we find you on the wrong side of the tracks,
going where you should not,
and finding a place to lay your head among the lost.

May we find you singing our songs of justice and peace
and removing your crown to do so.

May we find you with a word that lives in the hopes of the afraid
and a comforting peace for those who are broken.

May we find you laughing at the powerful, unnerving what folk think so secure,
while welcoming those who have nothing into your throne room.

O Jesus, reigning in the world
with your upside down kingdom,
may we find the faith to stand with you,
sovereign of life and servant of all.

BENEDICTION

As you have been fed, go to feed the hungry.
As you have been set free, go to set free the imprisoned.
As you have been received – give.

As you have heard – proclaim.

Go in Peace

And the blessing which you have received
from the Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit
be always with you. Amen.