

## Blairdaff and Chapel of Garioch Parish Church

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020

To be able to access the links, go to the bottom of this page and left click on the date. This will download the pdf in a new window, then simply click on the links as indicated.

### Welcome

Today is the second Sunday after Pentecost. May we hear God's word and be filled with his Holy Spirit.

#### Call to Worship: Psalm 34:1 & 3

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.  
Oh, magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!

Song: [Come on and celebrate](#) *Click on the link*

#### Prayer of Praise, Confession, Assurance of Forgiveness and Lord's Prayer

Loving Father, you are the spark of life behind the universe, the source of goodness in all things, from the magnificent to the microscopic. Father God, we come in awe, you are so precious to us, we worship you.

Loving Son, you are the friend of all, from the new-born to the most senior citizen. You came, Emanuel, God with us, to reveal to us the nature of God. We thank you for redeeming us by the power of the cross. Jesus, we come in awe, you are so precious to us, we worship you.

Loving Spirit, you are the fire burning within us with passion and compassion. You live within us to guide, teach us and equip us for service in the Kingdom. We open our hearts to your transforming power. Holy Spirit, we come in awe, you are so precious to us, we worship you.

Loving God, Father, Son, and Spirit, you are life, friend and power bound together in love. You are so precious to us, we worship you.

We confess before you the times we have taken for granted your love and provision for us. There have been times when we have been unwilling to seek or hear your guidance and when we have deliberately disobeyed your will. We have not taken care of the earth damaging its ability to take care of us. There have been times when we have not looked on



others with care, we have discriminated against people simply because they are not like us and we have failed to show love to the poor, weak, and voiceless. We confess all we have said and done that has caused you pain and all we failed to do that would have brought you joy. Merciful Father forgive us.

We thank you for sending Jesus to die upon a cross that we may be forgiven. We thank you that he conquered death, rising to new life opening the gates of heaven to all believers. We thank you that you sent your Holy Spirit to live within us. By his power, draw us closer enabling us to develop our relationship with you. Equip us for service in your Kingdom that we may be a people bursting to tell the Good News of Jesus Christ that others may come to know of his saving love and develop their own relationships with you.

Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we lay before you all our fears and concerns, our hopes and dreams and place our lives in your hands.

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in Jesus' name we pray...

Our Father, in heaven, holy is your name. Your Kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread and forgive us our sin as we forgive those who sin against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kingdom the power and the glory for ever. Amen

#### **A Prayer for this time of Coronavirus**

Loving God, as we begin to lift restrictions to our movements and some return to work, guide all who must make decisions about keeping one another safe, office, factory, and care home managers, and alike. Help us all to be tolerant and respectful as those with choices to make may not always get it right. Give insight to all who are seeking vaccines and medicines. May their research enable us to protect one another. We thank you willing to take part in medical trials for the sake of us all. We thank you too for all front-line workers who, at risk to themselves, are helping those infected with the virus and seeking to keep safe those needing personal care because they cannot care for themselves.



We ask your continuing blessing, guidance, wisdom and resilience for all in government and those advising national decision makers.

As we become ever more frustrated with the restrictions upon us grant us patience and keep us mindful to continue to protect ourselves and one another.

As the virus takes hold in many developing countries we place into your hands all who have little or no access to medical care, and we remember before you the needs of those for whom simply washing their hands is not straight forward for lack of clean water.

In the name of Jesus the healer we pray. Amen.

## Bible Passages

### Romans 5:1-11

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,<sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.<sup>7</sup> For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—<sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.<sup>9</sup> Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.<sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.<sup>11</sup> More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

### Matthew 9:35-10:23

<sup>35</sup> And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

**10** And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. <sup>2</sup> The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ <sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. <sup>9</sup> Acquire no gold nor silver nor copper for your belts, <sup>10</sup> no bag for your journey, nor two tunics nor sandals nor a staff, for the labourer deserves his food. <sup>11</sup> And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup> And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgement for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

<sup>16</sup> “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. <sup>20</sup> For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. <sup>21</sup> Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, <sup>22</sup> and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Song: [Lord you are so precious to me](#) *Click on the link*



## **Sending out of the twelve**

Trudy Parker, Jimmy Cox, and Bob Boulter, these are just three people from my childhood church who were instrumental in nurturing my faith. How did you come to faith; or if you haven't yet what or who has drawn you to read this? Who were, or are, the people in your life who have introduced you to Jesus?

Perhaps a friend suggested you come along one Sunday, or you became involved through a church group, like a knitting circle, befriended by others – who were they? You may well have been dragged along to Sunday School or to church by your parents, as I was. Why did they do that? What did their faith mean to them that they wanted that for you? Why did your Sunday School teacher (if you had one) bother with you Sunday by Sunday? Why did the Elders bother with maintaining the building? Why were there the same people in church week by week?

We often tell ourselves that faith is a private matter. It isn't. If it were you wouldn't be reading this because the Gospel message wouldn't have been passed on. The Church is nothing if it is not a missionary church. Faith is something to be shared and we are to witness to God working in our lives.

When Jesus first met the disciples he said, "follow me and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19). In our Gospel reading today we see that in action. Jesus himself had been teaching and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom and healing people in several towns and villages. Then he sent the twelve to do just that. They were to continue the work Jesus himself had been doing.

As we read about their encounters with people in the towns and villages of Israel the big question on our minds must be, "was it only these twelve Jesus sent, or does he send all who love and follow him?"

Jesus comments that "the harvest is plentiful but there are few workers". It might seem like that in the Church of Scotland today as we face a future with fewer Ministers. No doubt many of us are praying for more people to find a vocation and offer themselves for ministry. Jesus tells the disciples to pray for more workers, verse 38; and their prayer is answered.

What is the answer to the disciples' prayer? It is that they are the ones who are sent.

Jesus refers to the people as being like sheep without a shepherd (verse 36), referring back to the words of God to Ezekiel (Ezekiel chapter 34) when God himself said he would shepherd his sheep. Now, Jesus engages the twelve to assist in shepherding the flock. Now that's a very strong message for us in twenty first century Scotland. The followers of Jesus are not spectators, but doers actively engaged in mission and ministry.

Jesus gives the twelve authority but it's quite clear they are not to be arrogant or boastful about their being chosen to do the Lord's work. They are not to expect deference or any special treatment or status. They were to be teachers and preachers, healers and restorers.

They were to be people willing to accept, affirm, and welcome others, bringing life and hope.

They were to travel light, as we'd say today, not even take the kind of bag that beggars used to carry. The Gospel message is a free gift of God to all who want to receive it. Now that's another very strong message for us as we move into the 2020s.

What might traveling light look like? Certainly, these twelve were not encumbered with the costs (financial, or of time and human energy) of maintaining buildings. As we eventually move from COVID lockdown into some new normality what old ways that have proven ineffective and unfruitful should we abandon? What customs and activities do we practice only because we have always done it that way? What can we leave behind and what more fruitful means of mission and ministry should we develop?

Jesus taught the disciples to be fruitful in their mission. If they were unwelcome or their ministry rejected, or if they found the people of a town or village would not listen to them, they were to shake the dust off their feet and move on. We should measure our mission by its fruitfulness not by what we have done before or what we are most comfortable doing. If we try something new and it's ineffective, then we must shake off the dust and try something else.

Jesus also anticipated resistance. Not everyone would welcome the message nor the messengers. The disciples would find it tough going. We will certainly find those who consider us misguided fools and those who will be hostile. Then it's time to move on to places and people who *are* prepared to listen and respond to God's word and his love in action.

Jesus called twelve people to undertake this work. That was no random number, but rather, full of meaning. Until Jesus, the work of renewing and restoring Israel was based on the twelve tribes. Now the twelve were to be the *means* by which God worked in the world not simply a *sign* of his work. We continue that work today.

The passage we read from Paul's letter to the Romans is a summary of the Gospel and our salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is important to ask ourselves how much we value God's "*love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" If that is central to our lives, the most important thing we can have, then it's not something to keep to ourselves. We strive to live the command that we should love our neighbour as ourselves, whoever our neighbour might be. In our love of neighbour we want them to know of the love of God and develop their own personal relationship with Jesus declaring him to be their Lord and God.

Let us celebrate the work we do for God's Kingdom and for his glory. Let us thank God for lives touched by the church and for the fruitful service of so many. Let us praise God for the work done to his glory in this parish.

But, let us remember it is the Holy spirit working through us that does the work. Through the Holy Spirit, God provides us with the gifts to be effective fishers of men and women and to make disciples of all people baptising in the name of the Trinity. Indeed, we are the fruit

of the Holy Spirit working through those in times gone by, Trudy Parker, Jimmy Cox and John Boulter and other faithful people of the church.

We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.” (See Exodus 19:6 & 1 Peter 2:9). We are a people belonging to God. As individuals and as a Church we proclaim the Good News. As a royal priesthood we pray for one another and for the world. We minister to the needy in the name of Jesus. We must continue to go where Jesus sends us, into the towns and villages.

**Song:** [God forgave my sins in Jesus name](#) *Click on the link*



### **Prayers of the People for the People**

Loving God we give you thanks and praise for all who have brought us to come to know Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. We thank you for the power of the Holy Spirit working in the church. We pray for a growing church. We pray for a church that is passionate to grow in its prayer life, its understanding of your Word, in its relationship with you and in the number of your faithful people. Send us out into our neighbourhoods and communities renewed, empowered and equipped by your Spirit to be effective fishers of men and women and make Christ known in the world, witnessing to your saving love.



God of love and peace we lay before you the needs of the people of America torn apart by racial hatred and injustice. Your son was born of a Hebrew mother and fled to Egypt for fear of his life. He delighted in the faith of a Samaritan woman and a Roman soldier and accepted the help of an African man as he went to the cross. Help us to see that all are made in your image. We thank you for the great diversity of creation even within the human form, each one unique. So, we pray that all might be treated with dignity and respect regardless of the colour of their skin or racial heritage. Heal the wounds of those who suffer physical and verbal abuse and forgive those who inflict those hurts. When people abused and oppressed rise up in anger may the leaders of nations not simply seek to quell dissension but ask why people feel so aggrieved.

Pour out your peace, healing, and reconciling love on the towns and cities of America where racial injustice has spilt over into violence. May love eradicate hatred, trust eliminate fear, hope replace despair, freedom expel oppression, and violent encounters be replaced by loving embraces.

Healing God we bring to you all who are in pain, all receiving hospital treatment or recovering at home. Comfort and strengthen all who face life-changing conditions through illness or accident. Ease the burden of people who are weighed down by pain, anxiety, guilt, depression or fear. Place your healing hand upon them.

Loving God, we place into your hands all people who find each day a struggle to survive. People who have poor access to clean water and sanitation at the risk of disease, for people living on

the streets or in shanty towns amongst squalor and the risk of violence. We thank you for all who work to relive poverty. Help us to be generous in our giving that our love for others may be demonstrated by compassion in action.

Be with all near to death and those who mourn. Turn tears of sadness to tears of joy through your promise of eternal life through faith in your Son Jesus our Lord.

We offer you these prayers and all the concerns we lay before you today .....[ *name those concerns before God* ] in the name of Jesus our living Lord and Saviour. Amen.

### **Benediction and Blessing**

Almighty God, I thank you for your love for me. I thank you for food, clothing and the safe and stable place I call home. I thank you for my family, my friends and all who support, encourage, affirm, and help me. I thank you for Jesus, my Lord and Saviour. Send me out in the power of you Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.



[Blessing](#) *Click on the link*

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One of the consequences of us not being able to worship together is that the church anticipates a fall in income. However, we will continue to incur costs, of insurance etc. There will be little financial saving to our not meeting, yet revenues could be severely hit. Please prayerfully reflect on this and, if you are able, continue to put aside your financial offering so that you can make your contribution for the work of the church when we next meet together. Thank you.

Thank you too if you already give by standing order or by bank transfer, that is much appreciated.