

Barthol Chapel and Tarves Worship Materials Sunday 19 July 2020



“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.....And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a Father’s only son. (John 1:2,14)

INTRODUCTION

Several weeks ago I suggested setting apart a special space where you might spend time with God, both on Sunday mornings either on zoom or with the written worship materials from the web-site, and during the week.

Think about something that has happened to you over the last few months – your lockdown story. It might be happy, sad, challenging etc. Write it down, put it in your corner and offer it to God with thanks or with a request for healing and help.

Praise CH4 426 All Heaven declares

All heaven declared
the glory of the risen Lord;
Who can compare
with the beauty of the Lord?
For ever he will be
The Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee,
And worship him alone.

I will proclaim
The glory of the risen Lord,
Who once was slain
to reconcile the world to God.
For ever you will be
The Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee,
And worship you alone.

The Word of God: 1 John 1:1-4

1We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³we declare to you

what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We are writing these things so that our^a joy may be complete.

Reflection

If you have had an opportunity to read the introduction to this week's order of service you will see that I was encouraging you to think about a story of something that has happened to you over the last few months. During lockdown we have been shaken out of our usual routine and everyone will have their own story to tell about this time. It might be a funny story. It might be a sad one or a challenging one. It might be one of pain or hardship. Today I'm going to share with you a more light-hearted story of something that happened to me – apologies to any who have heard it before.

It was a Friday morning at the beginning of April. Our pilates class had moved on line and it was just about finished when the doorbell rang – from the window I could see a delivery van. Sean had gone out about 10 minutes earlier to take a funeral service at Cruden. So I left the class and nipped to the door and took in the parcel. Unfortunately it was quite windy and as I shut the outside door, the inside door blew shut – my heart sank as I realised that in my haste I'd forgotten to put down the snib. There I was stuck in the vestibule – in my pilates gear and bare feet – unable to get back into the house. Because it was early on in lock-down I felt I could not really go to my neighbours. I had been in contact with a lot of people for various reasons and might well have been carrying the virus.

Sean had taken the dogs with him but I knew that he did not plan to walk them as he was wearing his suit. So I reckoned he would be back within the hour – not too long to wait. Fortunately he had left his dog-walking coat and shoes in the vestibule so I put them on and curled up in a corner of the vestibule to await his return. There were a pile of Community Bible books lying on the table awaiting collection. So I thought I might usefully do some reading but of course guess what - my glasses were in the house!

As time wore on and the sun came out I realised that I would probably be warmer and more comfortable in the greenhouse – I could take one of the patio chairs in there. Because it was brighter out there I even managed to do some reading – a few chapters of Genesis - before my eyes began to protest. Slowly an hour passed and then another - where was Sean? To be fair an enforced quiet time for prayer was probably good for me at the time but this was getting ridiculous! Besides I had a ppt and worship materials to prepare for Sunday.... Eventually I heard the sound of the car in the driveway. It turned out that, as Sean was passing through Ellon anyway, he had decided to go to Tesco and do the weekly shop! He had tried to phone but of course my phone was in the house!

As I said earlier you will have your own stories to tell of this time– and these stories are important. Whether the words are written or spoken, stories are one of the main ways in which we communicate with one another – they are the way we share our experiences good and bad. Stories teach us about others and about ourselves – they draw us together into relationship with one another. And they help to form and build community. And of course story-telling lies at the heart of our Christian faith.

Earlier we heard the opening verses from John's letter and in those verses John states his purpose in writing that letter. And that purpose is to bring people closer to one another and to God. For the writer of this letter, life and joy are to be found in the community of faith - through connection with God and with each other. And the story that draws people into the community of faith is God's story – it is the story that we find in the bible of God's love for the world.

This is the story which the early Church had to share. The first disciples spoke and wrote of what they had seen and heard and experienced. They told of how they followed Jesus around Galilee as he taught and healed and cared for those in need. They spoke of his death on the cross. And they wrote of their experience of the new life they had discovered through their encounters with the risen Christ. And as others heard these stories they too were drawn into the community of faith. They connected for themselves with the life-giving story of God's love for them shown in Christ, the word of life.

And that story of Jesus life, death and resurrection, that speaks to us of God's love and grace still promises life and joy today. Because today we are still part of God's very real community of faith. Despite the physical distance between us, through Christ's life death and resurrection, we are drawn into relationship with one another and with God. And be assured that all our stories of this time, whether they be light-hearted or more challenging, all these stories are held safe within the one greater story of God's everlasting love for creation which has the power to heal and bring life beyond our imagining.

Pointers for Prayer

- Those suffering from or bereaved by the corona virus
- The NHS, its staff in hospitals and GP practices as well as the other emergency services and volunteers
- The Government and Scottish Parliament and their advisers as they seek to guide us out of lockdown
- Those engaged in scientific research and development
- Those whose businesses are struggling and all who are facing redundancy and financial hardship
- Family, friends and neighbours, those most affected by the lock-down and those finding it difficult to move forward
- Other people and situations who are in your hearts today.
- The Church that we might offer a faithful witness to Christ through this time

Praise 512 To God be the glory

To God be the glory, great things He has done;
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

Refrain:

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory, great things He has done.*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
 To every believer the promise of God;
 The vilest offender who truly believes,
 That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Refrain:

Great things He has taught us, great things He has done,
 And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
 But purer, and higher, and greater will be
 Our joy and our wonder, when Jesus we see.

Refrain

Notices

Next Sunday 9.45am Joint Worship (Service commences 10.00am)

If you would like to be added to the e-mail list for the link to Sunday's live worship gathering on zoom or join in on your landline please contact:

Rob e-mail sessionclerk@bartholchapel.org or Susanna Tel 851345 or e-mail smbichard@aol.com.

Pastoral Matters

To contact the minister Tel 851295 or e-mail aswindells@churchofscotland.org.uk

Care for the Community if you are aware of anyone in Tarves who needs help of any kind please contact Ruth 851887

Tuesday 7.00pm Tarves Session Meeting on Zoom – link will be sent out.