

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SIGHTHILL

82 years old

19 September 2021



Gathering Prayer

Leader: We will sing of the Lord's unfailing love forever;
All: Our mouths shall make known His faithfulness to all generations.
Leader: Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.
All: Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to the end, You are God.

(Psalm. 89:1, 90:1-2)

Leader: In the midst of a world where people hunger and thirst, come worship a God who feeds the hungry. In the midst of a world where people are abused and oppressed, come worship a God who calls for compassion and justice.

In the midst of a world filled with wars and rumour of war come worship a God who desires nothing less than peace for the world.

In the midst of a world of spiritual emptiness come worship a God who gives life meaning. Come worship a God whose grace and love know no end Come lets us praise and worship the Lord, God Almighty.

Even after 82 years of faithful and dedicated service of our parish church in Sighthill and the neighbouring areas, Jesus still ask the members and entire congregation of St Nicholas,

Song: Will you come and follow me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAYM8pWCwWk>

Responsive Prayer

Leader: Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord!
All: Praise the Lord! Give thanks to Him!
Leader: God has blessed us and brought us to this time.
All: God has blessed us and brought us to this place.
Leader: God has caused His name to dwell in our midst.
All: God has stirred our hearts and made us glad.
Leader: God has shown us His glory in His mighty Word.
All: God has shown us the way of truth and life.
Leader: Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord!
All: Praise the Lord! Give thanks to Him!
Leader: For 82 years, God has nurtured and fed us.
All: For 82 years, God has shown us His grace.
Leader: For 82 years, God has given Himself in Word and Sacrament.
All: For 82 years, God has empowered us with His Holy Spirit.
Leader: For 82 years, God has made us His witnesses in the world.
All: For 82 years, God has placed us in loving fellowship with one another.
Leader: Praise the Lord for 82 years! Praise Him for many more!
All: Praise the Lord for evermore! Oh, praise the name of the Lord!

The Lord's Prayer

Bible Reading: Mark 12:28-31

A teacher of the Law was there who heard the discussion. He saw that Jesus had given the Sadducees a good answer, so he came to him with a question: "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

Jesus replied, "The most important one is this: 'Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second most important commandment is this: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment more important than these two."

The Great Commandment – a brief Reflection

A scribe asks Jesus a question that was already under contention among Jewish leaders - "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answers with two linked commandments that would be well known to his listeners. The first is a declaration to the Jewish people from Deuteronomy 6:5 "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.**" Then in the same breath Jesus adds, "The second is this," and he quotes Leviticus 19:18 "**You shall love your neighbour as yourself.**"

If you love God, you will love your neighbour. Jesus' wise answer gives us some insight into God's priorities. If there are just two tasks God wants us to concentrate on more than any other they are loving God and loving those around us. It is worth mentioning that by saying, "as yourself," Jesus also expects us to love ourselves.

Upon hearing Jesus' answer to his question, the scribe concurs that Jesus is right in his priorities. Loving God and loving people are indeed more important than specific commandments required by the Jewish law. Jesus responds that his questioner is "not far from the kingdom of God." Similarly, when we too love God completely and care for others with the same care we show ourselves, we are not far from the Kingdom of God - from God's purpose, plan and presence. We also bring His Kingdom to the places where we live, worship and work. May this continue to be our prayer – to see, as we often pray, "His Kingdom come on earth", Amen.

Prayer

God of past, present and future, as we come before you O Lord, our hearts unfold to the glory of your Presence and the sunshine of your love. You have blessed us with so much; You have guided us through difficulties and hardships and have brought us safely to this point in our history.

Looking back, we can see how You have given us so much and You have invested so much in us and those who were before us. Yet we confess that despite all You have done for us, too often we have become discouraged and fallen short of your design and will for us as individuals and as a congregation.

Forgive us we pray. We know, O Lord, we cannot reach out to others unless you reach through us. Nor can we give of ourselves to your service except through the power of Your Holy Spirit working through us.

So, we offer our imperfect lives and wayward hearts to your transforming power. Let the miracle of your grace and love be expressed in and through our hearts and lives as we worship You on this day, so that others may see Christ in us.

God of the present, we thank you for your unfailing love, love that encourages, love that inspires and enables us to continue sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with one another and with our neighbours.

We pray for those of this church, our community and beyond who are ill, anxious or sorrowful. We ask that our hearts be open to your presence and our ears tuned to your call.

God of the future, we do not know what lies ahead, no we don't, but we know who holds the future, and we hear you challenging us to walk with you and with one another, without fear, into the future yet unknown.

Lord God, forgive us, we pray, for our past mistakes and failings. Grant us a unity of spirit and purpose and continue to bind us together with a code that cannot be broken. Help and empower us in the ongoing task of clearing our vision to see the way ahead. Guide and enrich our desire to grow – 'deeper in our love and knowledge of you, closer in fellowship and friendship, and wider as we share the Good News of your son Jesus Christ, in word and through our actions, in Bankhead, the Calders, Parkhead and Sighthill, In Jesus' name, Amen.

Closing Hymn: Look forward in faith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIs2MRyOrW0>

1. Look forward in faith -
All time is in God's hand
Walk humbly with Him
And trust His future plan
God has wisely led
His people by His power
Look forward in hope
He gives us each new hour
2. Look forward in faith -
The world is in God's care
His purpose of love
He calls on us to share
In our neighbour's need
The Lord is present still
He blesses the meek
The earth will know God's will
3. Look forward in faith -
God gives us life each day
Go onward with Christ
His Spirit guides our way
Now God lets us live
Within the sphere of grace
Trust ever in Him -
He rules o'er earth and space

CCLI Song # 1062170, Andrew J. Scobie© 1988 The Panel on Worship,
Church of Scotland, CCLI Licence No. 1198082

Sending (All)

Let us go and share the love of our God who reigns on high and yet who meets us in Jesus among the lowly, the poor, the needy and who invites us to care for them in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit today and everyday.