

# St Nicholas Church, Sighthill

3 October 2021

October is a month with a particular focus on tackling poverty. Sunday 17 October is the United Nations' International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and 4-10 October is Challenge Poverty Week. Since the early 1990s the Church of Scotland has placed a priority on putting resources into the most deprived communities. However, while there is great work happening in Priority Area congregations (those in the 5% most deprived parishes), it is important to recognise that the priority for the poorest and the most marginalised is the gospel imperative facing the whole church.

Rev Howard Hudson, Minister of Glasgow Bridgeton St Francis in the East

## Call to worship

Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise! Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies come cringing to You. All the earth worships You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to your name (Psalm 66:1-4)

## Opening Song: Oh Lord, our Lord

By Victoria Methodist Church, Bristol

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWPQkLlmzM8>

## Opening Prayer

O Lord our God, how great Thou art! When we look up at the stars on a clear, dark night and see the vastness of space and realise You made and designed all that, we see something of Your greatness and awesome power. When we see the clear blue sky on a summer's day and the bright sunshine showing everything in glorious technicolour and realise You made and designed all of it, we see something of Your greatness and awesome skill in creation. When we see on the television nature programmes highlighting the amazing variety of animals and environments and realise You made and designed all that, we see something of Your greatness and awesome skill in design. And when we remember that You gave Your son, Your nearest and dearest, to die for us on the cross to take away our sin, we see something of Your greatness and awesome love for us.

O Lord our God, how great Thou art, and how we praise You, worship and adore You! We confess: although Your greatness and power and love can be seen all around us, so often we don't see it. So often we tend to see the bad rather than the good, the negatives rather than the positives, the problems rather than the way forward, the things that pull us down rather than what lifts us up.

We can let our troubles, fears and doubts take over and stop looking to You, floundering in the dark rather than walking in the light, and being led and guided by You. So often we can let life get on top of us instead of sharing it all with You, looking to You to lead us through it.

Sorry, Lord, Forgive us. Work in us by Your Holy Spirit. Speak to us through Your word. Open our hearts and minds to You, to who You are and to how great You are, and to what You can do when we love You, trust You and follow You. Meet with us now and help us to know You with us to know the difference that You

make in our lives, and to worship You and learn from You. For we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

## 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.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory forever.  
Amen.

## Bible Reading: Psalm 8 Divine Majesty and Human Dignity

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honour. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

## Brief Reflection:

What a wonderful psalm this is, inspiring the first two verses of that great Russian hymn, "How great Thou art!" It speaks of the majesty, sovereignty and greatness of God, and how we need to open our eyes to see the greatness of God in creation. As we realise that God created all, what does that tell us of God?

The more we realise the majesty and sovereignty and greatness of God, the more amazing it is that such a God cares for us and has made human beings only a little lower than God, crowning them with glory and honour, calling us to be co-stewards of creation with God. Human beings matter to God, who views us highly, giving us dignity. This is how God calls us to view and treat our fellow human beings. How sad that so often we don't.

How often we use and abuse our fellow human beings and God's creation. Many from an early age have been treated terribly. I spoke to someone whose mother had no interest in her from birth except for training her at the age of three to be a shoplifter. Unwanted, abused, in and out of court all her life she was afraid of what might happen to her. In the conversation that ensued, I found myself saying to her that Jesus died for her on the cross. To which she replied, "Jesus couldn't have died for someone like me!" But eventually she realised that He had, and it blew her mind! Written off by most people throughout her life, she realised that she had not been written off by God. She turned and trusted Jesus, finding that she was valued and cared for by God, that she had a dignity that she had never known just as this psalm speaks of. If, as this psalm tells us, that's how God treats people, then so should we, writing no one off, but caring for them and treating them with the dignity God has given them, because "People Matter".

### 'I Am with you'

I am with you when things are going good,  
when the way is bright and clear,  
I am with you my child when life looks bleak,  
and your vision is blurred with tears.

I am with you when Happiness fills your heart,  
when the sun is shining bright,  
I am by your side when you feel alone,  
and you're surrounded by darkest night.

I am with you when you have many friends,  
when others for you care,  
I am always with you when you're alone,  
your loneliness to share.

I am with you when you're radiant with health,  
when you don't lack at thing,  
I am next to you when you're in pain,  
I am there to comfort bring.

My child, I will always be there for you,  
remember that I care,  
Remember that you're not alone,  
I am there to your sorrows share!

I will always be with you till the end of the world,  
I'll be there each step of the way,  
I am with you every moment, each hour,  
and each and every day

*theonlyBible.com*

### Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession



Our gracious God and loving heavenly Father, we thank You that we matter to You and that everyone matters to You so much that You even gave Your son, to become one of us and die for us. You raised Him back to life to sit at Your right hand, crowned with glory and honour, so that all who trust themselves to Jesus, can end up sharing in His glory in heaven for ever as Your family. We thank You that in Jesus, we see how much we matter to You.

When we think of these things, what can we do but be amazed? And gladly give You these offerings of ourselves, our time, treasures and talents, asking that

You use them to help others know how much they matter to You.

Loving Father, we ask that You guide our feet that we may walk in the footsteps of Your son Jesus. We ask that You guide and council those going through hard times and struggling to find solutions. Send them a Comforter. Soften the 'hardening hearts' of those in difficult relationships. Help them to make the decisions that are right for them. Where people are suffering injustice, we cry out for wrongs to be righted and for there to be justice.

Bless all children and those who care for them. For those suffering abuse – a place of safety that they may know love. For children in warzones – peace. For those suffering hunger – food from Your great world's bounty. And this Challenge Poverty Week, we pray that You would open people's eyes and hearts to see that people matter, no matter how poor they are, help us to treat them with dignity and respect, valuing and appreciating them, and playing our part to help people out of poverty and build a fair and just society. All this we ask in the name of Your Son Jesus, who died for us that we may be forgiven our sins, Amen

### Closing Hymn:

#### Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3h1GUkpkP2A>

1. Love divine all loves excelling  
Joy of heaven to earth come down  
Fix in us your humble dwelling  
All your faithful mercies crown  
Jesus you are all compassion  
Pure unbounded love impart  
Visit us with your salvation  
Enter every trembling heart
2. Come Almighty to deliver  
Let us all your grace receive  
Suddenly return and never  
Never more your temples leave  
We would always give you blessing  
Serve you as your hosts above  
Pray and praise you without ceasing  
Glory in your perfect love
3. Finish then your new creation  
Pure and spotless let us be  
Let us see your great salvation  
Perfect in eternity  
Changed from glory into glory  
Till in heaven we take our place  
There to sing salvation's story  
Lost in wonder love and praise

CCLI Song # 1038991, Charles Wesley | Word & Music

### Final blessings

May you know the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. May His spirit overshadow and consume you. May the song within you which sings for eternity, sing loudly. May the Father quiet the voices around you which tell you to settle for less than what He promises.

"Always be joyful. Pray continually and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus." *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

