

# ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SIGHTHILL

## SUNDAY SERVICE

31 JULY 2022



### Call to worship

L: "Vanity of vanities" says Ecclesiastes

**A: And our newspapers corroborate the theme.**

L: Money gained; money lost; stolen by a missile or a bomb

**A: We work hard and others benefit, how can we not complain?**

L: But there's another story, a higher truth we know

**A: A power working, by God's hand, a kingdom ever growing.**

L: In all our doubts and trials, our wars and poverty

**A: Your faithful hand is guiding; Your grace always providing.**

L: So, help us, dear Lord this morning, to move from doubt to faith

**A: To live our lives as stewards of the things You've blessed us with.**

### Give thanks with a grateful heart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=047xtruOZR0>

### Chorus

Give thanks with a grateful heart

Give thanks to the Holy One

Give thanks because He's given

Jesus Christ His Son

### Verse

And now let the weak say I am strong

Let the poor say I am rich

Because of what the Lord has done for us

Ending: Give thanks

*CCLI Song # 20285*

### Prayer

Rev Dr Will Stalder, Minister of Methlick Parish Church

God, You are our highest good, the only One able to satisfy our deepest longings. You are the true font of joy and gladness. In You, we are always rich. In You, all gifts are ordered and find their rightful place. In You, we find the joy of giving. In You we find shalom: wholeness, healing.

But how quickly we are overawed when others grow rich. We are blinded by the splendour of their homes, the increase of their wealth as their profit margins increases. How quickly we turn to doubt and disbelief, suspicion and misgiving. "It's vanities of vanities," we say – "this war and unfair policies."

Or we turn to greed and try to hoard. We build bigger barns, open another bank account, to hold what should be shared. Lord, we confess, we can easily become misguided. We can be swayed by greed and selfishness. We can store up reserves in churches when our neighbours can't afford their supper. We can covet more and more of that which is not really our own. But in the end, we acknowledge that it leaves us feeling empty. Lord, we ask for Your grace and forgiveness.

Fill us with the awareness that all things come from You, and that we will be forever restless unless all things find their right place and purpose in You. Fill us with gratitude for the things You've given us. Fill us with the riches of Your kingdom, so we can share with those who need it. And give us clean hearts, kind and open hearts to do it. And in so doing, we and our neighbours, both new and familiar, will find shalom: wholeness, healing.

Thank You, Lord, for always hearing our prayers, extending grace with open arms and giving us that which we need to change and order our lives back to You, for Your glory and the benefit of others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### The Lord's prayer

#### Bible Readings: Acts 5: 1-11 – Ananias and Sapphira

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."

When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price

you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

## Children's address

### Poem (author unknown) – Second/Live service

This year I stopped to contemplate the kind of gift I'd bring  
To lay at the nail-scarred feet of my Gracious Heavenly King.  
He's given my very life to me, and the blessings I hold dear,  
But I can't come up with anything appropriate, I fear.

Every time I give Him something, He more than doubles the return...  
I gave to Him my weakness, His strength He then confirmed  
Would always be there for me to securely hold on to.  
I gave Him my shattered life – He gave me life anew.

I gave Him my pain and heartbreak, all that troubled my weary soul  
He gave me hope and happiness, and made my body whole.  
I gave Him all my doubts and fears, the things that stood in the way  
Of my daily service in His name – He made them go away.

I offered Him my feeble voice, to sing His praise in song –  
He filled my heart with a melody, that will last my whole life long.  
I offered Him my hands to serve, to help out those in need,  
He gave me the talent to use these tools, so that I would succeed.

I gave Him my life completely, to show His light in a world of night,  
He gave me a wonderful testimony, a way to share His light.  
I offered Him my eyes to see all that they could take in –  
He showed to me a world of fear, unhappiness and sin.

For every gift I gave to Him, He handed back to me  
Instructions for their uses – endless possibility  
To reach a world that needs to find the Saviour that I found,  
So on and on, I serve, for to Him in love I'm bound.

## Reflection: Keeping back – Trouble in Church

### Offering Song (Live/Second service)

#### I will offer up my life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWP05Fm39sY>

### Prayers for offerings

Bountiful Lord, thank You that You are willing to take all that we offer to You and then multiply it for good. We know that we grow by giving in faith, gratitude, and even in want.

For when we give, we give to You, and You multiply it beyond our wildest imaginations. Take all that we are and all that we have – our time, talents and money, and bless this community and grow Your church through our giving. Amen!

## Prayers for others and ourselves

Christine Odell

Generous God, we pray for rich countries with a surplus of wealth and for poor countries in debt to them; we pray for rich countries whose stores are overflowing, and for countries whose harvests have failed; we pray for rich countries flaunting their material success, and for the poor who live there, forgotten or ignored. Generous God, help us not pile up treasures for ourselves While remaining paupers in Your sight.

Generous God, we pray for those whose wealth has given them power, and for those whose poverty has made them powerless; we pray for those whose lives are given to making money, and for those who can barely afford to live; we pray for the successful, the popular, the talented, and for those who are given little respect. Generous God, help us not pile up treasures for ourselves while remaining paupers in Your sight.

Generous God, we pray for Your church with its many possessions, and for Your people who live in poverty; we pray for Your church, entrusted with the gospel, and for those crying out for love and hope; we pray for Your church, filled with Your Holy Spirit, and for those who long for guidance and peace. Generous God, help us not pile up treasures for ourselves while remaining paupers in Your sight.

In the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, so that through his poverty we might become rich. Amen

### Closing song (Zoom service) I will offer up my life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWP05Fm39sY>

### Closing hymn (Live/Second Service); At the name of Jesus (Camberwell)

1. At the name of Jesus  
Every knee shall bow  
Every tongue confess Him  
King of glory now  
'Tis the Father's pleasure  
We should call Him Lord  
Who from the beginning  
Was the mighty Word
2. Humbled for a season  
To receive a name  
From the lips of sinners  
Unto whom He came  
Faithfully He bore it  
Spotless to the last  
Brought it back victorious  
When from death He passed
3. In your hearts enthrone Him  
There let Him subdue  
All that is not holy  
All that is not true  
Crown Him as your captain  
In temptation's hour  
Let His will enfold you  
In its light and power
4. Brothers this Lord Jesus  
Shall return again  
With His Father's glory  
With His angel-train

For all wreaths of empire  
Meet upon His brow  
And our hearts confess Him  
King of glory now

CCLI Song # 38947, Caroline Maria Noel |  
Michael Brierley © Words: Public Domain

### **Final prayer and blessing**

We go in the knowledge of God's grace and provision, grateful for all that God has given and desiring to be rich in the things of God, sharing the gifts God has given us with those who need God most.

And as we go, may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us now and until He says to you, "Well done, my good and faithful friend." Amen