



Worship at Home—21 March 2021

Celebration of Holy Communion

Opening Prayer—Louise Lamont

Heavenly Father,

We awoke this morning to another day in this magnificent world that you created for and entrusted to us. Signs of spring are all around us. There is some warmth in the sun, birds are singing and starting to build nests, lambs are being born and flowers are bursting through the soil. Truly you have blessed us.

But this spring is like no other. Not only are we approaching the end of Lent with the promise of Easter beckoning us like a shining beacon with its promise of eternal life, but we are, with your love and guidance, nearing the end of a year the like of which none of us have experienced before. A year ago our everyday life came to a grinding halt and we found ourselves in a state of isolation not really understanding what was happening. With your help we found an inner strength and persevered and adapted to a new way of living.

Throughout this past year we have learned new skills and rediscovered a slower pace of living. We have had time to look around and wonder at all the majesty of your creation. Things we believed to be important we now accept are not that essential as we realise that what is really important is other people and how we can help each other. We have grown closer to people we may have only nodded to in the past. Now we stop and speak.

There are those who will question, as has been done so many times before, how a loving God could allow this devastation to come upon his people. But we know that you are our Father in Heaven and, like any parent, you stand back and watch your children make mistakes. When we see the error of our ways, you are there to welcome us back with much rejoicing for you will always love and care for us. Often those who doubt your goodness will cry out for your help in times of despair and you are always there.



It is with great sadness
that we have to
intimate the deaths of

Mrs Elizabeth (Betty)
Lobban
22 Riccarton Avenue

and

Mrs Irene Eunson
7 Muir Wood Crescent

Please pray for the
families.

Father, we praise your name and worship you with all our being. You sent your son, Jesus, to live amongst us then die for us that we would have eternal life. So we raise our voices together in the prayer that he taught those first disciples so many years ago.

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, the power, and the glory, for ever.

The Scripture Reading is John 13 verses 1, 3-7, 15-17

Jesus washes the disciples feet.



It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

AMEN

Sermon

We have all heard the expression ‘actions speak louder than words’. No one knew this more than Jesus himself. Jesus not only taught his followers but he embodied his teachings through everything he did. Jesus taught through eloquent stories people could relate to, then, he often enacted his parables in the ordinary every-day ways that he lived.

For instance, when Jesus took a child and said, “whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child shall not enter therein.” . . . a few verses later he was holding children in his arms and blessing them, saying, “the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” Jesus’ actions were often sermons in and of themselves even without words, he did things which revealed the nature of God!

In this helpful way, Jesus likes to give us tangible ways to understand the love of God. So often we find Jesus sharing food with people and giving them water or wine to quench their thirst. Very early in John’s Gospel we find Jesus with his mother as guests at the Wedding of Cana in Galilee. Jesus saved the host from tremendous embarrassment when the wine ran out . . . he turned the water into wine. Jesus was the Divine host behind the scenes blessing each person with an abundance of generous giving.

When Jesus saw that the crowd of 5,000 or so who had followed him were hungry, he felt deep compassion for them. He knew they were listening because they were hungry both physical and spiritually. He gathered all that the people had, a few loaves and fishes and in bringing the whole community together, the people were fed. John’s Gospel defines the presence of our living Jesus as the Bread of life. Which makes it ever more poignant when we think of our Lord’s Prayer when we ask God to give us our daily bread. This is more than physical nourishment, but the spiritual nourishment that comes only from divine love.

We also remember that after the crucifixion, at the end of a long journey on the Road to Emmaus, in the act of breaking of the bread and the blessing of the wine that the disciples recognised the presence of Jesus in and with them. No one in all of human history has ever understood more deeply the hunger of the human soul than Jesus.

I think this year we have recognised the deepest hunger in our own hearts in very new and strange ways because of living through a Pandemic and all of the changes in our lives. All the things we’ve had to do without—hugs, sharing food, singing or sharing communion in this Kirk!

I was listening last week to Sarah Dunant offering a ‘Point of View Podcast’ on Radio 4. I admired her honesty so I will paraphrase a little of what she said. She shared things we can all relate to. She mentioned that in being plunged in and out of lockdown we learned a shocking truth, that we shouldn’t talk to one another, or meet face to face because speaking and touching became directly connected with death. She herself is an introvert, a writer who enjoys time by herself. However this prolonged time alone has meant that when she is out on her walking route she gets as excited as a puppy when she meets anyone she vaguely knows and has even befriended strangers whom she would barely have acknowledged before—she said that The Covid has made her strangely friendlier than ever as if she has a new longing or need to make any social interaction, meaningful, kind, joyful.

In this way, Sarah Dunant explained that the lack of speaking, meeting or has strangely connected us more than pulling us apart. We are more thankful for small things and we feel the need to count our blessings, to share how lucky we are. And yet, she says, and yet . . . whilst we may be euphoric when the lockdown ends and we can resume togetherness, there will be another conversation, the things will be

harder to say . . . underneath the surface each of us carries deep levels of shock, pain, anxiety and grief . . . not just our own personal losses but those losses experienced severely by those who are in minorities or who were already disadvantaged by years of austerity.

She mentioned too, the *existential* pain of time lost. For those at the beginning of life; loss of school, sport, social development, steps into adulthood. Or for those who are older like herself. She said, “lockdown has made us painfully aware how much less time we have.” She says, “To heal this real sense of loss, loneliness and grief will take something more powerful than a vaccine.”

When we read the bible, from the Old Testament to the New, we read how often people were exposed to danger, persecution, isolation or fear and yet somehow God was always with them giving them what they needed, leading the way.

How fortunate are we to have a faith in God. Throughout scripture we learn that our God is a faithful God who desires to nourish and bless us. Think of the 23rd Psalm which we heard sung earlier.

*The Lord is my Shepherd
I lack nothing
He leads me to green pastures and still waters
Even though my enemies encamp around me
You prepare a table before me*

We *have* lived through a very strange Pandemic Year. How much we feel the enemies encamp around us—enemies of fear, worry, isolation. How we feel hungry for the things we miss, how much we are aware of yearning for things that might satisfy our deepest spiritual longings.

Jesus’ actions, like his sermons, always witnessed to the loving nature of God. And the nature of God, embodied in Jesus life, and his death is love. The scripture which Louise read, is one we often hear on Maundy Thursday. What more beautiful action sermon than this one. Whilst the disciples were preparing the Passover Meal, Jesus’ alone knows that this is his last meal with them. He knows that the Son of Man will fall like a grain of wheat and die—and so must it be so that God can show, through Jesus’ death and resurrection the full extent of his love. Jesus knows the time has come and then before he shares the Passover Feast, we read:

“Having loved his own he now showed them the full extent of his love. As the meal was being served, he wrapped a towel around his waist. He poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples feet.”

Everything Jesus did on the night before his death was the culminating sermon of his life. Professor Emil Brummer called the night of the last supper, “The illustrated Word of God.” What greater action sermon could Jesus give his followers then and now. Jesus was offering them something tangible, physical, a memory to hold onto him by—something to remember him by that would bring his presence into the daily aspects of life, washing, praying, blessing a meal together.

Before the meal, taking a towel and a basin of water, he washed their feet like a humble servant—in an act of devotion to make them clean. In this pouring out—this action sermon if you will, Jesus is illustrating the nature of God. It is God alone who can wash us clean from sin or selfishness.

Then he prayed and he served them bread and wine, the symbols of God’s saving grace to the Jewish people from the time of the Passover. These living things become the symbols of his everlasting saving grace. He poured out water, he poured out wine and in doing so, he was both pouring out his love and preparing them for the pouring out of his blood on the cross.

In a short time Jesus would be hanging, humiliated on a cross. His love literally poured out.

A Roman soldier would take a spear and pierce his heart out of which both water and blood flow. He had told them, had he not, greater love has no-one than this—to lay down one's life.

In this Sacrament we remember his body broken, his blood shed. In this pouring out of love, Jesus is healing the distance between our humanity and his divinity. He is the embodiment of God's love revealed, not in forceful, controlling or coercive power but in the humility of service, in the deep bond of an invitation to friendship with God and with one another. This is the meaning of communion.

This power is a great power but it is the antithesis of the power we watch displayed by the empires of North Korea, Myanmar military, the Assad Regime, Russian or Chinese Communism. And yet this invitation to meet God here has power. It is Christ himself who invites us to be fed at the table of God. It is Christ who can quench our thirst because here, at the table of God, there is an infinite supply of Divine energy. We eat food to energise our bodies. Books and experiences feed our minds. Here, in prayer and sacrament we receive God's limitless supply of grace, love and encouragement. Here we receive God's spiritual gifts to nourish our spirits, to help us thrive, and not only to thrive but bear fruit.

We need not earn this bread and wine. It is freely given. And we don't claim it for ourselves alone. There is enough to feed and satisfy every soul who comes to God, recognising our need for God who gives us life. Here the fulfilment of his love is poured out to the world.

Let us Pray

Lord God we are humbled to be invited always into Your Presence. May the sacrament we are soon to share give us strength not only for today. You graciously pour your love out to us and to all humanity. In this meal draw us closer to the eternal life from whom the healing stream doth flow.

Help us, feed us, quench our thirst.

Amen

Invitation to Holy Communion

He was always the guest.

In the homes of his friends, he was always the guest.

At the meal tables of the wealthy

where he pled the case of the poor, he was always the guest.

Upsetting polite company, befriending isolated people,

welcoming the stranger, he was always the guest.

But here, at this table, he is the host.

Those who wish to serve him must first be served by him,

those who want to follow him must first be fed by him,

those who would wash his feet must first let him make them clean.

For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished;

this is the time when Christ can make us new.

So come, you who hunger and thirst for a deeper faith,

for a better life, for a fairer World.

Jesus Christ, who has sat at our tables, now invites us to be guests at his.

The Story

What we do here, we do in imitation of what Christ first did,
To his followers in every age, Jesus gave an example and command rooted in
the experience he shared with his disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem.
On the night on which he was betrayed, and as they were sitting at a meal, Jesus took a piece of bread
and broke it. He gave it to the disciples saying,

"This is my body. It is broken for you, Do this to remember me".

Later, after they had eaten, he took a cup of wine and said,

"this cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Drink this all of you, to remember me."

So now we do as Jesus did:

We take this bread and this wine,
the produce of the earth and fruit of human labour,
In these, Jesus has promised to be present;
through these, Christ can make us whole.
As Jesus drew near to God to thank him for his gifts, let us so do. . .
Let us pray

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Loving God, is indeed right, to praise you and give you thanks
for you made us, and before us,
you made the world we inhabit, and before the world,
you made the eternal home in which, through Christ, we have a place.
All that is spectacular, all that is plain have their origin in you;
all that is lovely, all who are loving point to you as their fulfilment.

And grateful as we are for the world we know
and the universe beyond our ken, we particularly praise you,
whom eternity cannot contain, for coming to earth and entering time in Jesus.

For his life which informs our living,
for his compassion which changes our hearts,
for his clear speaking which contradicts our harmless generalities,
for his innocent suffering, his fearless dying,
his rising to life breathing forgiveness, we praise you and thank you.

Our gratitude rises for the promise of the Holy Spirit, who even yet,
even now, confronts us with your claims and attracts us to your goodness.
And offers us gifts of grace and peace beyond our understanding.

Therefore we gladly join our voices
to the song of the Church on earth and in heaven:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD,
GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT.
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY.
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

And now, lest we believe that our praise alone fulfils your purpose, we fall silent
and remember him who came because words weren't enough.

(Silence)

Setting our wisdom, our will, our words aside, emptying our hearts,
and bringing nothing in our hands, we yearn for the healing,
the holding, the accepting, the forgiving which Christ alone can offer.

Merciful God, send now in kindness,
your Holy Spirit to settle on this bread and wine
and fill them with the fullness of Jesus.
And let that same Spirit rest on us, converting us,
from the patterns of this passing world,
until we conform to the shape of him whose food we now share. Amen

COMMUNION

(breaking bread)

Among friends, gathered round a table,
Jesus took bread, and broke it, and said,
"This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

(Holding up a cup of wine)

Later he took a cup of wine and said,
*"This cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death.
Drink this all of you, to remember me."*

Jesus, firstborn of Mary.
HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, Saviour of the world.
HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, monarch of heaven.
HAVE MERCY ON US.

He whom the universe could not contain,
is present to us in this bread,

He who redeemed us and called us by name
now meets us in this cup.

So take this bread and drink this wine.

In them God comes to us so that we may come to God. (sharing of bread and wine)

The Peace

Christ who has nourished us, is our peace,
old and young, he has broken down the barriers
to bind us to him and to each other.
Having tasted his goodness
The peace of the Lord be with you.

Let us pray.

In gratitude, in deep gratitude
for this moment, this meal,
we give ourselves to you.
Lord, having tasted the living bread, may we live to your glory,
both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven.

Amen.

Faith, Hope and Love

O cleanse us from unrighteousness
And teach us how to pray,
That we may have our thoughts and hearts
Uplifted day by day.

Protect and bless our path through life,
And guide us in Thy Word,
That we may hear and so obey
With FAITH in Thee Dear Lord.

Our need for Thee is great O God,
We cannot do without;
Thy Presence calms us hour by hour -
Thy Word we'll never doubt.

In sickness and in pain we'll take
Thy Spirit as our sword,
To battle through to victory
With HOPE in Thee Dear Lord.

Our lives shall blossom free from fear,
Through daily prayer with Thee,
And we shall rise upon The Day,
To Life eternally.

Our Faith and Hope and Love for Thee
Endure for evermore,
But of these three our LOVE shall be
An ever open door.

Alastair Hardie (23 March 1957)

Alastair Hardie—A Tribute by Bill Wood

Alastair was born in 1930 in a village near Newcastle. His family moving to Edinburgh, where he attended Wardie Primary. In 1939 on the outbreak of WWII his father decided to move the family away from danger to the safety of an aunt's cottage in Ardishaig. However, within a few months the family were back in Edinburgh. His secondary education was at the Royal High School and this is where his 25 year association with the Scout movement started. In 1953 at a dance in Corstorphine he met a young girl called Helen. Alastair and Helen married on 23 March 1957 in Cairns Memorial Church in Gorgie where Alastair later became an Elder. Their son, Bobby (now Alastair Jr) was born in 1958 followed in October 1961 by a daughter Sheenagh. Sadly in 1998 Helen died after a long illness – Alastair having nursed her for 13 years. They had been married for 41 years. He was a proud grandfather to – Sarah, Emma and Andrew.

A keen writer he helped with publishing Sheenagh's book "Why Me?" He also wrote and had published "The History of Edinburgh Castle"; and "The History of the Closes in the Royal Mile".

He was an Elder in Currie Kirk; he coordinator the Kirk's Prayer Covenant; a volunteer at the Friday Day Centre; and a leading member of the Kirk Singers. He will be sadly missed—missed by those who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Lenten Studies

Easter will be holding a series of Lenten Studies every **Wednesday at 1pm**. Each session should last about an hour and will be conducted via Zoom. If you are interested in taking part, please email Louise:

elf.lamont@blueyonder.co.uk

by Tuesday morning and she will send you the link.

Sunday Club is taking place on Zoom this term. Fortnightly beginning on Sunday 24th January at 4.30pm. We'll have a Bible story, games and activities together for around 45 minutes. If your child would like to join in then contact Heather at familyworker_jvp@outlook.com for details.

Kirk Contacts

Minister: Rev Dr Easter Smart—Tel: 449 4719 email: esmart@churchofscotland.org.uk

Session Clerk: Hamish Leal—Tel: 449 3288 email: hamish@hamishleal.co.uk

Family worker: Heather Merriman email: Familyworker_JVP@outlook.com

Please get in touch with Nina at the Kirk Office—451 5141

email currie_kirk@btconnect.com if you need anything.

We have friends willing to listen, shop, walk a dog, fix a garden.

Website: [//www.curriekirk.org/](http://www.curriekirk.org/) or [//www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/](https://www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/)

All sermons from Currie Kirk can be found on the Kirk's website and on YouTube—search Currie Kirk



Currie Kirk Guild

Once again we had an extremely successful meeting on Tuesday afternoon when we were joined by Tom Gordon who talked on “Covid, Coping and Comedy”. If you didn’t attend, you missed an extremely amusing yet poignant talk. We sincerely hope that, once everything has returned to some form of normality, that we can again have him speaking to us in person.

Meanwhile we soldier on. There will be another coffee morning this Tuesday at 11am. Send me your email address and I will send you the link if you need an hour of chat or just to listen.

Easter eggs and cash are being delivered to my door and I have so far been very strong and resisted chocolate temptation. Cut off date for getting them to me is **Monday 29 March**. Many thanks to all of you who have already contributed.



Finally, to finish on an upbeat note, Irene Hendry celebrates her 90th birthday on 24th March.

We take this opportunity to wish Irene a very happy birthday.

Take care and look after each other,

Louise Lamont Guild President

Currie Kirk Lenten Appeal—St Luke’s Leprosarium, Tamil Nadu, South India

We have heard in the past two weeks the moving stories from Gordon MacKinlay when he and his wife Genevieve visited St Luke’s Leprosarium. This says very eloquently why we would like to support St Luke’s at this time. If you would like to make a donation, please put it in an envelope, address it to Eddie Pigott, mark it ‘St Luke’s’ and put it through the letterbox of the Church Office. If you would like it to be gift aided add a dated note saying this. Cheques should be made payable to ‘Currie Kirk’.



Alternatively you can make a direct transfer into the Currie Kirk bank account by sending it to Sort Code:

80-06-20; Account No: 00336407 and marking it ‘St Luke’s’. It would help if you could then email Eddie at: pigottsef@icloud.com letting him know that you have sent a donation and saying if you wish it gift aided.

Hamish Leal, Session Clerk

All People

These resources are designed to help you explore the Bible as a family together at home while we can't go to church. Be as creative as you want to be and enjoy spending time with each other and with God.

Prepare yourself...

Invite everyone to suggest words to describe God. Record these on a large sheet of paper.

We praise you, God, that you are
(insert words).
Amen.



Challenge

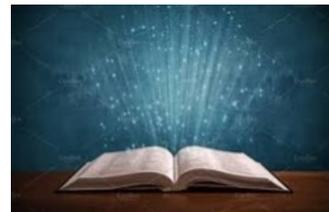
You have 60 seconds to gather as many things in your hands as you can safely carry. Once your hands are full try waving, shaking hands or hugging someone.
Is it possible to do?

Question...

Has there ever been a time when you have felt left out?



How did that make you feel?



Read the Bible...

Today's verses are found in John 12:20-33. You can read them in a Bible or find them [here](#).

You could try reading the verses in different versions to see if it adds to your understanding of the passage.



Talk together...

Phillip and Andrew have seen the way Jesus welcomes everyone, leaving no-one out. So when some Greeks (who would be considered “outsiders”) came to meet Jesus they knew Jesus would welcome them too.

- * Why do you think Jesus was so alluring to people? Why did so many people want to be in his presence?
- * Have you given anything up for Lent? Is it easy or difficult to give up something that is normally part of your life?
- * Where do you feel most welcome and why?
- * How might you make others feel more welcome? Is there one thing you could do to make someone feel loved and welcomed?
- * Jesus talks about his death that is to come. This might seem strange, but Jesus is pointing out God’s enduring love for humankind. It is available to all and no-one is excluded. And the way it’s been made possible was through Jesus dying on the cross and rising again. How can we love like Jesus loved? What might we need to give up in order to welcome others?

Play together...

Musical chairs (or statues or bumps!):

Continue the game until one person is left.

Talk about how it felt to be “out”.

Can you think of people who might be on the outside generally? Is there any way we could help them feel more included?

Pray together...

Curl up into a ball on the floor and imagine you are seeds. Slowly mime growing by opening out your fingers, then arms, then slowly standing up until you are stretched as wide as they can be.

Dear God,
just as a grain of wheat needs to let go of its seed to grow into a great big plant, help us to let go of the things that hold us back from loving you.

Amen.

Make something...

You will need: a selection of pipe cleaners.

Make lots of people in different colours, shapes and sizes.

Once you’ve made as many as you want join the figures into a circle by twisting the hand of one figure onto the next. You should end up with a free-standing ring of people symbolising diversity.

If you don’t have pipe cleaners, you could use playdoh or make paper people.



Praise together...

[Shine from the inside out](#)
[Everybody's welcome](#)

