



The Free North Church Inverness

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

11 am – Sunday 17th May 2020

Service conducted by the minister, Rev Angus MacRae.

Tel: (01349) 862183. Mobile: 07 506 006 459.

Email: angusmacrae1967@gmail.com

This is a guide to Sunday morning service. The service can be streamed online from 11 am on the Free North YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjxeX18IKP4grKdqWEt2dgw>

WELCOME, CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER (words adapted from St Augustine of Hippo)

Lord Jesus Christ, you are great and greatly to be praised.

Your power is great, and your wisdom is infinite.

We want to praise you without ceasing.

You call us to delight in your praise,

For you have made us for yourself,

And our hearts find no rest until they rest in you.

So may all glory, praise and honour be ascribed to you,

With the Father and the Holy Spirit, both now and for ever. Amen.

PSALM 96a:1-10 (Sing Psalms version)

O sing a new song to the LORD,
sing praises to his name;
And his salvation day by day
let all the earth proclaim.

His glory and his mighty deeds
to every land declare:
How great and awesome is the LORD!
With him no gods compare.

For other gods are wood and stone;
the LORD made heaven's height.
All power and majesty are his;
he dwells in glorious light.

All nations, to the LORD ascribe
the glory that is due;
Glory and strength ascribe to God,
and praise his name anew.

Enter his courts with joy, and bring
an offering with you.
Worship the LORD in holy fear;
all earth, before him bow.

Tell every land: "The LORD is King!"
Established is the earth
And cannot move; the LORD will judge
the peoples in his truth.

Tune: Weymouth (DCM).

Recorded at Buccleuch Free Church, Edinburgh.

CHILDREN'S TALK: SANDY FINLAY

BIBLE READING: JOHN 1:43-51 (NIV) - read by Danny MacKenzie

43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." 44 Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. 45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have

found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip. 47 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.” 48 “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.” 49 Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.” 50 Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” 51 He then added, “Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”

VIDEO: CHRISTIANITY EXPLORED – STARTING ONLINE 8 PM MONDAY 25th MAY

HYMN: YET NOT I BUT THROUGH CHRIST IN ME

What gift of grace is Jesus my Redeemer,
There is no more for heaven now to give,
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom,
My steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace.
*To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus,
For my life is wholly bound to his.
Oh, how strange and divine, I can sing: all is mine!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.*

The night is dark, but I am not forsaken,
For by my side, the Saviour He will stay;
I labour on in weakness and rejoicing,
For in my need, His power is displayed.
*To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me,
Through the deepest valley He will lead,
Oh, the night has been won, and I shall overcome!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.*

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven,
The future sure, the price it has been paid.

For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon,
And He was raised to overthrow the grave.
*To this I hold, my sin has been defeated,
Jesus now and ever is my plea.
Oh, the chains are released, I can sing: I am free!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.*

With every breath I long to follow Jesus,
For He has said that He will bring me home;
And day by day I know He will renew me,
Until I stand with joy before the throne.
*To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus;
All the glory evermore to Him.
When the race is complete, still my lips shall
repeat:
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!*

*When the race is complete, still my lips shall
repeat:
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!*

Sung by Chris MacLeod. © 2018 CityAlight Music. Words and music by Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson & Michael Farren. CCL License No. 616262. CCL Streaming License No. 324811.

SERMON – JOHN 1:43-51: DID GOD REALLY GROW UP IN NAZARETH?

John’s Gospel challenge us to believe in Jesus. But, are you convinced and ready find eternal life through Jesus? In this section, from day 4 of a 7-day cycle, we meet some more people coming to believe in Jesus.

1). SOMEONE WENT LOOKING FOR DISCIPLES IN GALILEE

Someone decided to leave Bethany beyond Jordan, to travel 90 miles north to Galilee. Days 4 to 7 allowed plenty time for travel and to win over some people ‘up north’ needing to hear the Good News of Jesus. That SOMEONE *could* have been *Jesus* (that is how the NIV and ESV understand the text). But the Greek text allows us to understand that it was *possibly Andrew* who decided to go up north. Andrew constantly brings people to Jesus through this gospel. Philip responded in faith, and quickly shared his discovery of the Messiah with Nathaniel. We can be sure Jesus will go with us as we look to win new disciples.

2). DID GOD REALLY GROW UP IN NAZARETH?

Nathaniel came from Cana in Galilee. To start with he was sceptical about Jesus. The other gospels and Acts 1 call him by his family name, Bartholomew. He always crops up as a companion of Philip. He wondered out loud if the Messiah could possibly come from a backwater little town like Nazareth? Although John piles up around 20 impressive names and titles for Jesus, some of these names troubled Nathaniel. Could the “Messiah” and “King of Israel” also be “Jesus from Nazareth”, and ordinary “Joseph’s son”? If you were to introduce a humble Crofter from Borodale in Skye to some of the wealthiest landowners in Europe, they might be tempted to look down their noses! But Jesus from lowly Nazareth really was God in the flesh! John’s Gospel challenges anyone tempted to ignore Jesus with the cry: “COME AND SEE!” Nathaniel was honest about his doubts. He was a true Israelite in whom there was no hint of Jacob (Jacob was a fraud who became a new man, renamed Israel). Nathaniel came to see that Jesus knew his heart, as only God could know it. Whatever your heart is like today, Jesus can transform it by his grace. Do you want that? Trust in Jesus and you will see wonderful things. He is the link to God and the Kingdom of Heaven. Ask for God’s help to tell others about Jesus this week. If you have never done so before it is time to believe in Jesus for yourself. Come and see!

SONG OF THE MONTH: PSALM 130 (Version by Emma Turl)

From the depths of shame and sorrow,
from my guilt and my despair,
LORD, I cry to you for mercy—
be attentive to my prayer.

*All my joy is in your presence,
all my hope is in your word;
more than watchmen wait for morning
waits my soul for you, O LORD!*

If our sins you still remembered,
how could anyone draw near?
But with you there is forgiveness,
so we come with reverent fear.

With the LORD is love unfailing—
let his people hope in him!
With our God is full redemption,
full atonement for our sin.

Sung by Ann MacRae. Tune: Woodlands. Author: Emma Turl. Praise Trust © 2000.

BENEDICTION (from 1 Thessalonians 3 and 5)

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances... Do not quench the Spirit.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful... The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

DIARY THIS WEEK

Sunday: There is an informal evening fellowship on Zoom and YouTube tonight at 7 pm. This will include an interview and testimony with Johnnie Murchison. The Meeting ID is: 253 249 2745. The regular password or phone numbers can be obtained from Martin (office@freenorthchurch.org). You can also request a regular weekly email update from the Free North Church from Martin.

Monday: The General Assembly meets on Monday at 6 pm (online only and for just one session). The main business of the Assembly is postponed and may be taken up in early October. Rev Donnie G MacDonald will continue as Moderator for a second year, before Rev Neil MacMillan is appointed in 2021.

Tuesday: The Deacons' Court will meet online via Zoom for one item of business at 7:15 pm, followed at 7.30 pm by an **Equipping Seminar on Church Revitalisation and Vision** for all our deacons and elders, led by Peter Turnbull.

Wednesday: Our Monthly Home Groups meet via Zoom. There are several groups and members should be aware of how to access their own group. A central Church Night fellowship will be available on Zoom & YouTube at 7.30 pm (using the same log on as for Sunday evenings and regular Wednesday meetings).

Saturday: Colin Wilson and Sandy Finlay have organised a special Day Conference (on Zoom) this Saturday 23rd from 10 am to address current trends in education policy in Scottish schools. Contributions will include personal testimony from Christian teachers in the Highlands and talks from John Denning and Nigel Kenny of the Christian Institute. Email Colin Wilson (colinkessock@gmail.com) to get log-on details.

Praying around the Church: This week we pray for sister churches in Garrabost (a vacant congregation in Point, Isle of Lewis) and Ferintosh and Resolis in the Black Isle, where Rev Calum Iain MacLeod is minister.

NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Christianity Explored starts on Monday 25th at 8 pm (online using the usual Zoom details for our Sunday and Wednesday Church Nights). See a 1-minute publicity video here: <https://youtu.be/9UDdKhFz5Vg>. Pass that on this link to your family and friends and consider taking part and inviting a friend. Email Martin at office@freenorthchurch.org to register your interest. This will help us to get a Guide booklet into your hands. Sandy Finlay will lead the course, which over 7 weeks introduces us to Jesus through the pages of Mark's Gospel (rfinlay@toucansurf.com, 01463 241765).

Appeal for India: Thanks to all who supported the Mission Board appeal for pastors, evangelists and other workers in the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India. By midweek over £18k had been contributed. Our congregation sent £1k from our Mission Fund. The appeal is open until the end of the month. Contact our local treasurer or follow the link here (<https://freechurch.org/news/appeal-for-india>).

HERE TO HELP EACH OTHER

Many have relatives, neighbours and friends to assist during this time of lockdown. But the church is a family in Jesus Christ. We are here to help and encourage each other. If you need help of any sort, we would love to hear from you. Contact the minister (07 506 006 459; angusmacrae1967@gmail.com), any elder or deacon, or the church office (office@freenorthchurch.org) if we can help with a spiritual or practical need.

Covid-19 Ness-side Support is a community support group involving some members of our congregation and covering much of Inverness (Kinmylies to Culloden). Their direct number is 01463 353015. You can contact Julie Ferguson on 07 780 726 893 to find out more, to request help or to offer support to others in the community. The group mobilises community volunteers to help deliver shopping or prescriptions, exercise dogs, cut grass and offer emotional and practical support in any way required. It is great to support community initiatives, and important that we can ask for help when we need it.

Giving to support the Free North: Donate through our website (PayPal logo at the foot of the page). To set up a standing order, post a cheque or to arrange for Gift Aid, please contact our congregational treasurer, Mrs Barbara Macphail, 31 Towerhill Avenue, Inverness, IV2 5FX. Tel: 01463 794622. Email: treasurer@freenorthchurch.org. We welcome donations to our *Development Fund* specifically to fund the post of **Women's Pastoral Worker** which we hope to create in the near future.