



The Free North Church Inverness

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

11 am – Sunday 31st May 2020

Service conducted by the minister, Rev Angus MacRae.

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This is a guide to our Sunday morning service. The service is streamed online at 11 am on the Free North YouTube channel (and is then available afterwards for catch-up or to watch again):
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjxeX18IKP4grKdqWEt2dgw>

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

PSALM 1 (a):1-6 (Sing Psalms version)

Blessed is the one who turns away
from where the wicked walk,
Who does not stand in sinners' paths
or sit with those who mock.

Instead he finds God's holy law
his joy and great delight;
He makes the precepts of the LORD
his study day and night.

He prospers ever like a tree
that's planted by a stream,
And in due season yields its fruit;
its leaves are always green.

Not so the wicked! They are like
chaff that's blown away.
They will not stand when judgment comes
or with the righteous stay.

It is the LORD who sees and knows
the way the righteous go,
But those who live an evil life
the LORD will overthrow.

*Tune: Amazing Grace (CM).
Recorded at Stornoway Free Church.*

NEWS UPDATE FROM REV CHRIS DAVIDSON, MERKINCH FC CHURCH PLANT

PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

YF PASS-THE-ROLL CHALLENGE UPDATE

KIDS' CALL & RESPONSE SONG – GOD IS A HOLY GOD

God is a holy God. (God is a holy God).

We can't be friends because of our sin. (We can't be friends because of our sin).

God is a holy God. (God is a holy God).

We can't be friends because of our sin. (We can't be friends because of our sin).

Jesus died to wash us clean - When we put our trust in Him.

God opens His arms and welcomes us in. (God opens His arms and welcomes us in).

Sung by Alana Glover & Liv Chapman of Emu Music in Oxford (Song number 2389604). Emu Music © 1998 Paul Sheely. CCLI Song No: 2389604. CCL License No. 616262. CCL Streaming License No. 324811.

BIBLE READING: JOHN 2:12-25 (NIV) - read by Shona Macleod

12 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days. 13 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. 15 So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. 16 To those who sold doves he said, 'Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!' 17 His disciples remembered that it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' 18 The Jews then responded to him, 'What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?' 19 Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.' 20 They replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?' 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. 23 Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. 24 But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. 25 He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.

SERMON – JOHN 2:13-25: LORD OF THE NEW TEMPLE

At the first "Sign" in John 2 we find Jesus relaxed, in celebratory mood at a family wedding. But his second "Sign" given a few days later demonstrates his anger to the Jewish leadership and temple authorities. This conflict over cleansing the temple (a conflict repeated three years later at another Passover) was one of the issues that eventually lead to Jesus death on the cross. There are two questions to consider:

1). WILL YOU FACE THE ANGRY LAMB? John mentions many Jewish Feasts and Festivals, especially three consecutive Passovers (John 2:13; John 6:4; and the Passover where Jesus died, John 11:55). John had a knack of speaking to both believers and non-believers, to strengthen existing faith or awaken a newfound faith. We may prefer the celebratory Jesus of John 2:1-12, but we also need to face the angry Jesus of John 2:13-25. We need to face both if we are to be saved! But just what got Jesus so angry that he made a whip out of reeds and chords and drove out moneychangers and the animals and the people selling them from the temple? Here Jesus acts as the fulfilment and replacement for God's House. Jesus is God's final new temple. The original temple was supposed to welcome all nations, opening up a pathway to God's presence. At dedication of the Temple King Solomon prayed that God would meet and hear the cry of both Jews and foreigners (1 Kings 8). The beautiful temple of white marble and gold shone like a beacon to a world in spiritual darkness, serving as God intended it to be – "*a house of prayer for all nations*" (Isaiah 56:7). Commerce, convenience and making money had replaced God's intention for this building. The Gentiles were squeezed out of the Court of the Gentiles, and that outraged the Lord Jesus.

2). WILL YOU COME INSIDE THE LAMB'S HOUSE? Jesus acted just as the Old Testament Scriptures predicted. His anger came from his ZEAL to honour God and to bring you (and the lost nations!) inside God's House. He did not care about profits or rushing through a set of rituals. The job of Israel's true King was to maintain, protect and care for the Temple. But zeal for this task would destroy Jesus: *zeal for your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me* (Psalm 69:9). The Temple authorities could kill his body, God's true temple, but Jesus would raise it up again after three days. Where else but in Jesus can you find access to God? God is present intensely not in any sacred building but only in His Son. We do not need buildings so long as we have God's Son. The prophet Zechariah had much to say about the future true temple of the Lord. All nations will be welcome there and everything in Jerusalem will be holy, even the bells on the horses and the everyday cooking pots! But the last verse of Zechariah is cryptic. *And on that day there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord Almighty*. Literally that means there will be "NO TRADER" or "MERCHANT" in the Lord's House. Jesus will ensure no one is trying to make money out of God's people, because in him we have free access Jesus our temple. In verse 22 we read: *After he was raised from the*

dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. They believed and they were saved. Do you believe? Are you ready to pray and enter God's temple?

CONFESSION OF SIN & ASSURANCE OF PEACE AND SALVATION

Merciful God, we cast ourselves before your throne of grace.

You see in us every wrong act, unclean thought and selfish motive.

The burden of our sins is more than we can bear.

But where our sin abounds, O God, let your grace much more abound.

May we find forgiveness in Jesus Christ our only resting place, for the sake of your glory. Amen.

HYMN: BEHOLD OUR GOD

Who has held the oceans in His hands?
Who has numbered every grain of sand?
Kings and nations tremble at His voice
All creation rises to rejoice.

*Behold our God,
seated on His throne.
Come, let us adore Him.
Behold our King,
nothing can compare,
Come, let us adore Him!*

Who has given counsel to the Lord?
Who can question any of His words?

Sung by Chris Macleod. Music & Words by Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird, & Stephen Altrogge.

Who can teach the One who knows all things?
Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds?
Behold our God...

Who has felt the nails upon His hands,
Bearing all the guilt of sinful man?
God eternal, humbled to the grave,
Jesus, Saviour, risen now to reign!
Behold our God...

You will reign forever...!

Behold our God...

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GOD PROMISES PEACE TO HIS TROUBLED PEOPLE IN ISAIAH 54:10-13

'Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,' says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

'Afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will rebuild you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with lapis lazuli. I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be their peace.'

BENEDICTION

DIARY THIS WEEK

Sunday: There is an informal evening fellowship on Zoom and YouTube tonight at 7 pm. This will include Bible Teaching on James 4, *God's Discipline for Dads and Mums*. We will also hear stories written down by one of our oldest church members, D-day veteran Mr William McEwan. 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: **Christianity Explored** is 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 on this link to your family and friends and consider taking part and inviting a friend. Sandy Finlay leads the course introducing Jesus through Mark's Gospel (rfinlay@toucansurf.com, 01463 241765).

Wednesday: Our Church Night fellowship is on Zoom & YouTube at 7.30 pm (same log on as for Sundays).

Generation Prayer: Pray for our sister churches in Kilmallie & Ardnamurchan and St Peter's Dundee.

NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Mission Partners we Support: This morning **Rev Chris Davidson** shares an update from the Merkinch Church Plant. Please pray for this ministry to take deep roots, especially in the challenges of lockdown. **Mez McConnell** leader of 20-Schemes is ill with Covid-19. **Philip Amos** is our CWI mission partner working with Jewish people in London. Pray for him in the challenges of lockdown. Philip is studying the Gospel of Matthew with Simon, a young musician. May he encounter Jesus and respond in faith and repentance.

Scottish Government Guidance indicates we are in Phase 1 of an exit from strict lockdown. Pastoral visits may now take place outdoors, at a physical distance, in places such as gardens, the street or a public park. For the present all places of worship remain closed. We are making plans to resume public meetings, when this is safe and allowed, while continuing to offer worship online for those unable to return in person.

Zoom software updates: Please ensure you have updated to latest version of Zoom by the end of May.

YF Pass-the-roll video challenge: We need the consent of an adult if young people want to send in a video for the challenge. Email clips to iainmmacrae@aol.com. Include the following: Name(s) of persons appearing in a clip or photo. A dated declaration giving permission for the Free North Church to use the video or image on our website or other online platforms. A parent or guardian must give consent for under 18s. An email declaration from a recognised email address will be accepted as a signed consent.

WFM Projects: We are sadly unable to hold the usual Supper Night supporting the WFM Project. Anyone who would like to donate to the 2020 Project can do so via our congregational treasurer. Funds will support FC Camps; Cross-cultural work in Govanhill; Church Planting in Peru; and the Fraser family serving with WEC International in Holland. Our Saturday Morning Women's Fellowship plan a Virtual Coffee Morning on 13th June, when you can meet some of the national WFM Committee Members. More details next week.

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 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 your support to others in the community.

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**. We hope to share news of an appointment with you next week!