



The Free North Church Inverness

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

11 am – Sunday 23rd August 2020

*Sunday services at 11 am and 7 pm are conducted by our minister
Rev Angus MacRae. Tel: (01349) 862183. Mobile: 07 506 006 459.*

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This is a guide to our Sunday Morning Service, held live in-person at the Free North Church and also broadcast online at 11 am on the Free North YouTube channel and available afterwards for catch-up.

Tonight, a short service including praise will stream on YouTube at 7 pm, followed by a Zoom fellowship at 7.30 pm. (Evening Praise: Psalm 126; Psalm 139 – *Were I to Cross from land to land*). (Subscribe to our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCjxeX18IKP4grKdqWEt2dgw).

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 136)

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of gods. His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords: His love endures forever. Amen.

PSALM 122:1-9 (Scottish Psalter Version)

I joyed when to the house of God,
Go up, they said to me.
Jerusalem, within thy gates
our feet shall standing be.

Jerus'lem, as a city, is
compactly built together:
Unto that place the tribes go up,
the tribes of God go thither:

To Isr'el's testimony, there
to God's name thanks to pay.
For thrones of judgment, ev'n the thrones
of David's house, there stay.

Pray that Jerusalem may have
peace and felicity:
Let them that love thee and thy peace
have still prosperity.

Therefore I wish that peace may still
within thy walls remain,
And ever may thy palaces
prosperity retain.

Now, for my friends' and brethren's sakes,
Peace be in thee, I'll say.
And for the house of God our Lord,
I'll seek thy good away.

Tune: Free Church (CM).

Words traditional 1650 Scottish Psalter.

*Recording © 2002 Baracah Music,
from the live album*

'Together Joyfully - Psalms from Ross-shire'.

PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

This week we pray for our sister churches in **CROSS (NESS, LEWIS) & THURSO & NORTH COAST.**

VIDEO UPDATE – FREE CHURCH YOUTH CAMPS (Katie Cumming)

HYMN: CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne,
while heaven's eternal anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of Him who died to be
your Saviour and your matchless King
through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life,
triumphant from the grave -
who rose victorious from the strife
for those he came to save:
His glories now we sing
who died and rose on high;
who died, eternal life to bring
and lives, that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of love!
Who shows his hands and side,
those wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified!
No angel in the sky
Can fully bear the sight

But downward bends his burning eye
At mysteries so bright!
Crown him the Lord of peace!
His Kingdom is at hand,
From pole to pole, let warfare cease
And Christ rule every land!
A city stands on high,
His glory it displays,
And there the nations "Holy" cry
In joyful hymns of praise.

Crown Him the Lord of Years
The Potentate of Time;
Creator of the rolling spheres
In majesty sublime!
All hail, Redeemer, hail,
for you have died for me -
Your praise shall never, never fail
through all eternity!

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BIBLE READING: JOHN 5:31-47 (read by Martin MacLean)

³¹ 'If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies in my favour, and I know that his testimony about me is true. ³³ 'You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. ³⁵ John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light. ³⁶ 'I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish – the very works that I am doing – testify that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, ³⁸ nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. ³⁹ You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life. ⁴¹ 'I do not accept glory from human beings, ⁴² but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. ⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ 'But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?'

SERMON – JOHN 5:31-47 – JESUS & THE GLORY THIEVES

The key to this passage is Jesus' warning to the Jewish leaders about their lust for human glory. They missed the glory of God standing in front of them because they were glory-thieves, wanting human

affirmation. There are three parts to the message. They got three things wrong and so missed Jesus. **1). WRONG GLORY (v. 41-44).** Wanting human approval is natural enough, but do we also have the approval of Jesus? By rejecting Jesus the Jewish leaders showed they did not have God's love. Jesus never sought glory for himself, but glory seekers end up following false Messiah's. **2). WRONG AUTHORITY (v. 31-40).** The Jews demanded other authorities to confirm Jesus testimony about himself. But God had already provide the works / signs, the testimony of John the Baptist, and the voice of God himself from heaven and in the scriptures. The Jewish "bible experts" searched the scriptures, but failed to see Jesus there, the one at the heart of the message. How ironic it was that God's voice and face was available to them in Jesus. **WRONG HOPE (v. 45-47).** Such blindness inevitably led to misplaced hopes. They hoped Moses would justify their actions. But by hating and rejecting Jesus, they had no real spiritual hope. God wants us to read the bible in order to meet Jesus as our Saviour, and to live before others bringing glory to Jesus. Otherwise we too are glory-thieves.

HYMN: SHOW US CHRIST

Prepare our hearts, O God.
 Help us to receive.
 Break the hard and stony ground.
 Help our unbelief.
 Plant Your Word down deep in us;
 cause it to bear fruit.
 Open up our ears to hear,
 lead us in Your truth.

*Show us Christ, show us Christ.
 O God, reveal Your glory
 through the preaching of Your Word.
 Until every heart confesses Christ is Lord.*

Your Word is living light
 upon our darkened eyes.
 Guards us through temptations,
 makes the simple wise.

Your Word is food for famished ones,
 Freedom for the slave.
 Riches for the needy soul.
 Come speak to us today.

Show us Christ...

Where else can we go, Lord?
 Where else can we go?
 You have the words of eternal life.

Show us Christ...

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BENEDICTION

DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

For the next few weeks **BOTH** Morning and Evening Services will premiere on **YouTube** at 11 am and 7 pm. There will then be a Zoom-based informal fellowship after the evening service from 7.30 pm. Our evening theme is: **The Next Revival**. Tonight's message is on **Psalm 126 – Revive Our Fortunes, Lord!** The usual Zoom log-on details can be obtained from Martin (office@freenorthchurch.org).

IN-PERSON WORSHIP AT THE FREE NORTH: We are delighted to resume in-person worship in our church building. Initially this is limited to 50 persons on Sunday mornings at 11 am and most Wednesday evenings. Sunday evening will be an online-only service. There will be no creche or Sunday School, but families with children are welcome. Try to arrive in good time to be shown to your seat by the welcome team. If you need water bring your own water bottle and any books, bibles, or children's toys and materials that you require. The Scottish Government require the use of facemasks for indoor church services and 2-metre social distancing. Worshipers may be seated with other household members or with someone in their social "bubble". For the first few weeks we plan to divide the congregation **by surname** into **two groups** so

that as many as possible may attend. The pattern is Sunday 23rd - surnames **Macl to Z**; Sunday 30th - surnames **A to MacK**; Sunday 6th September - surnames surnames **Macl to Z**. This guidance is flexible and is intended to avoid a "booking" system. **Visitors and folk who cannot attend when it is their "turn"** (perhaps because of travel, illness or shift work) **should feel free to attend whenever they can**. We do not wish to exclude anyone who wishes to attend or to put pressure on anyone to return, for example if they have health concerns. Online worship services will continue to be provided for those worshipping at home or in a cluster of homes. Please do not attend church if you experience any symptoms of Covid-19.

Wednesday: This month only our **Home Groups** will be on the 25th when we will begin a study of 7 Psalms. Study guides are available. We begin with Psalm 3, keeping Psalm 4 for next time. Study Guides cost £3 and you can pay at any time in whatever way is convenient. The meetings will initially take place on Zoom. Anyone who does not have access to Zoom could join another household. If you are not in a Home Group please consider joining one so that we can support and encourage each other. Contact Sandy (241765) if you would like to join a group. The minister is taking 3 days off midweek and will be away from home, so the Central Group will be hosted by Derek Morrison (use the usual Zoom Log-in details).

Next Sunday 30th: An in-person service in the church at 11 am, beginning a new teaching series on **TITUS: STRAIGHTENING OUT GOD'S CHURCH**. Please arrive in good time and bring a face covering. Online services at both 11 am and 7 pm. **After morning church** all are welcome to meet up at the Inverness College Campus (visitor Carpark) at 1 pm for a gentle walk. Bring a picnic. Suitable for all abilities, buggies, kids bikes.

The **Faith Mission** hold **Drive-In Gospel Events** at the Black Isle Showground in Muir of Ord, this Friday 28th & Saturday 29th at 7 pm, and on Sunday 30th at 4 pm.

Guy's Group: The next Guys groups are on Monday 31st August. It will be helpful to read pages 39-58 (Part 2 of 'The Problem') of Joe Barnard's book *The Way Forward*.

The annual **Getty Sing Conference** (which requires a registration fee) is online from 30th August.

Saturday 5th September - **9 am walk with Derek Morrison**. Meet at "Ord Hill" Forestry Carpark, North Kessock. The Ord Hill Circular walk (forestryandland.gov.scot/visit/ord-hill) is 2¼ miles, or 1½ hours.

The Free Church is looking for a new CEO. Details can be found at freechurch.org. The closing date 26/8/20.

ETS Saturday Course: The new session of the Saturday Part-time Courses at ETS begins on Saturday 12 September 2020. These will be online only until face-to-face teaching is permitted. Full course information and an online registration form can be found on the ETS website: ets.ac.uk

Free Church Books has a summer sale. The 'SUMMER20READS' discount code offers 25% off the recommended price of many titles. Details at <https://thefree.church/books20sale>.

Pray for a movement of God in our City. Give thanks for all who have heard the gospel during lockdown.

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).

Giving to support the Free North: Donate through our website (PayPal logo). 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 development fund donations to support Carrie Marlow our new **Women's Pastoral Worker**.