



The Free North Church Inverness

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

11 am – Sunday 1st November 2020

Sunday services are conducted today at 11 am and 6 pm

by our minister Rev Angus MacRae. Tel: (01463) 832616.

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This is a guide to our 11 am ***Sunday Morning Service***, held live in-person at the Free North Church and broadcast online the Free North YouTube channel. Join us tonight for the ***“Sundays at 6”*** evening service, available only on YouTube. This will be followed immediately by a **Zoom Fellowship** with our guest speakers, **Sarah and Seoras**, who have a special interest in Central Asia. Both our Sunday services are available afterwards for catch-up. (Subscribe to our YouTube channel: youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness).

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 77)

You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

With your mighty arm you redeemed your people.

*The waters saw you, O God, the waters saw you and writhed;
the very depths were convulsed.*

*Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters,
though your footprints were not seen. Amen.*

PSALM 77:1-2,7-14 (Sing Psalms Version)

I cried aloud to God for help;
I prayed that God would hear.
When I was plunged in deep distress,
I sought the Lord in prayer.

“For ever will the Lord reject
and never show his grace?
Has he withdrawn his steadfast love
and turned from me his face?

“For all time has his promise failed?
Is God no longer kind?
Has he in his great wrath dismissed
compassion from his mind?”

Then to my heart there came this thought:
“On this I will rely—

The years of the right hand of power
of him who is Most High.”

I will recall the LORD’s great deeds—
your works of long ago.
I’ll meditate on all your acts;
your mighty deeds I’ll show.

O God, most holy are your ways.
What god compares with you?
You are the God of miracles,
whose power the nations view.

*Tune: St. Columba. Recording and words © Free Church
of Scotland Psalmsody and Praise.
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PRAYER & LORD’S PRAYER

Praying for Kiltarn (Evanton); Hope Church, Coatbridge; Esk Valley, Midlothian.

CHURCH FAMILY UPDATE

Zoom Fellowship tonight; Online Prayer on Wednesday; Church Membership; Opportunities to support and encourage one another in Covid Protection Level 1 and over the coming months.

BIBLE READING: JOHN 6:16-24

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷ where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. ¹⁸ A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. ²⁰ But he said to them, 'It is I; don't be afraid.' ²¹ Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading. ²² The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realised that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. ²³ Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ Once the crowd realised that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

HYMN: GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unsearchable mines
Of never-failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs
And works His sov'reign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flow'r.

Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

*Words: William Cowper (1774). Performed by Crossroads Music, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA.
Listen again at <https://youtu.be/51Bx1UwLc0U>. CCL License 616262. CCL Streaming 324811.*

SERMON: JOHN 6:16-24 – WALKING ON THE WAVES

Three of the gospels record a night-time miracle immediately following the miraculous feeding of a crowd of over 5,000 people. Jesus dismissed the crowd and sent his disciples away by boat so that he could pray alone on the mountain, but during the night the disciples got into trouble on the lake. Despite rowing for hours, they were still caught in a storm, buffeted in the centre of the Sea of Galilee by strong wind and waves. **1). YOU REALLY SHOULD FEAR JESUS.** The disciples were afraid, not so much of the storm, as the unearthly sight of Jesus walking towards them towards the end of the night, as he effortlessly went walking on the waves. The poet William Cowper, with accurate biblical imagery, spoke of the authority of Almighty God over nature and events. *"He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm"*. Here was Jesus doing what no mere man could do. Was he a ghost? Was the Almighty God walking towards the terrified men in the boat? We should fear Jesus, just as we should fear God the Father, the holy God of the Exodus whose path led Israel through the great waters (see Psalm 77). **2). YOU REALLY SHOULD GIVE ALL YOUR FEARS TO JESUS.** God has not promised to spare us the storms of suffering and trouble, but he does promise to draw near to his people in all the events they fear. Jesus, God in human flesh, was willing to get

in the boat with them and to remove their fears. Jesus' calming words to his disciples echo God's self-disclosure to Moses as God who exists, the great "I AM" God. If we fear Covid-19, or a health scare, or any number of other rational or irrational terrors, our faith knows the correct response is to trade those fears for the fear of the Lord. Please give him all that terrifies you, and as you face storms and deadly waves, welcome Jesus into the boat!

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

Gracious Lord, we bless you that our
life and purpose is only found in you.
Yet our earthly end is to return to dust.
You, O Lord, and you only calm the storms and walk upon the waves.
You set free the prisoners and feed the hungry.
You alone redeem the guilty who confess and forsake their sins.
Grant us growth in faith, and hope and love.
Bring us by your great mercy through every storm,
through all darkness and even through sickness and death.
Bring us to the feast of eternal life, where you reign in light for evermore.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

HYMN: JESUS PAID IT ALL

I hear the Saviour say,
"Thy strength indeed is small,
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
find in Me thine all in all."

*Jesus paid it all,
all to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.*

Lord, now indeed I find
Thy power, and Thine alone,
can change the leper's spots,
and melt the heart of stone.

Jesus paid it all...

For nothing good have I
whereby Thy grace to claim –
I'll wash my garments white
in the blood of Calv'ry's Lamb.
Jesus paid it all...

And when, before the throne,
I stand in Him complete,
"Jesus died my soul to save,"
My lips shall still repeat.
Jesus paid it all...

*Elvina M Hall, 1865. The Trinity Hymnal © 1990. Sung by Dornoch Free Church Praise Group.
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BENEDICTION

**SUNDAY AT SIX, live evening worship on our YOUTUBE CHANNEL, from 6 PM tonight.
Lessons for a United and Growing Church from Ephesians.**

Followed by a live **FELLOWSHIP on Zoom**, with two guests **Sara and Seoras** joining us to share their story and calling to serve God and the people of Central Asia. Log onto Zoom after the service around 6.30 pm.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING GIFTS

You may wish to give a thanksgiving gift during November for the Free Church Disaster and Relief Fund.

WOMEN'S PASTORAL WORKER - CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like to get in touch with Carrie Marlow, the Women's Pastoral Worker, you can contact her by phone on 07583 498782 or email carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org. We warmly welcome Carrie to her new role. Please support this role in prayer and by passing on any pastoral needs and referrals.

DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

IN-PERSON WORSHIP AT THE FREE NORTH: For the past three months we have been able to offer in-person worship on Sunday mornings and on some Wednesday evenings, and this has greatly benefited those able to share in mutual fellowship. We make every effort to make in-person meetings as safe, un-stressful and comfortable as possible. As required by law we maintain discrete but careful records of all who attend and obtain contact tracing details from anyone who is not personally known to the welcome team. Try to arrive in good time to be shown to your seat by the welcome team. If you need water bring your own bottle and any books, bibles, or children's toys and materials that you may require. Unless exempt, a face-covering should be worn indoors. Worshippers may be seated with other household members or with someone in their social "bubble". **Families with children are always welcome to come to church (for all or part of the service) and a Sunday School for Primary age children is available in the church hall.** For the present we divide the congregation **by surname** into **two groups** so that as many as possible may attend. The pattern is Sunday 1st November - surnames **Macl to Z**; Sunday 8th November - surnames **A to MacK**. For the present we wish to avoid a "booking" system, but that may become necessary as we are glad to have a growing number wishing to attend in-person. The Kirk Session will meet this Tuesday, 3rd November, to review our arrangements and pattern of services. The Session are thinking about offering two in-person services each Sunday morning at different times to allow up to 100 people to benefit from in-person worship each Sunday. **Visitors and folk who cannot attend when it is their "turn" should feel free to attend ON ANY SUNDAY THAT 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. **Please DO NOT attend church if you experience any symptoms of Covid-19.**

Tuesday: The Kirk Session will meet (via Zoom) at 7.30 pm.

Wednesday: We meet **ONLINE ONLY on Zoom** for a whole-church evening of Prayer for the City. After congregational prayer and Bible study we will break into smaller Zoom 'rooms' for prayer and fellowship.

Guys Groups and Catch-Up Sessions: The next Guys Groups, discussing Joe Barnard's book *The Way Forward*, are at 10 am and at 7 pm on Monday 9th November ('**Men Need Camaraderie**' – read pages 87-94) and on Monday 7th December ('**Men Need Competence**' – read pages 95-108). Use the usual Zoom log-in. **Chris MacLeod** is also running some catch-up sessions for any who missed earlier studies of Joe's book. **Email Martin** at office@freenorthchurch.org for details of **Chris MacLeod's Zoom meetings**.

Log-on details for our regular Zoom meetings can be obtained from Martin (office@freenorthchurch.org).

New Members: We hope to welcome new members into the Free North Church family on Sunday 22nd November. Please contact the minister, any elder, or our women's pastoral worker if you are a new Christian believer and wish to discuss a commitment to follow Jesus and to belong to his church or if you have moved from a previous church connection and now wish to commit yourself to the Free North church family.

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).

Support the Free North: Donate through our website (PayPal logo), the offering box, or via our treasurer, Mrs Barbara Macphail, 31 Towerhill Avenue, IV2 5FX. (01463 794622, treasurer@freenorthchurch.org).