



# The Free North Church Inverness

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

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## A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP

**10 & 11 am – Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

Sunday services are conducted today at 10 & 11 am and at 6 pm  
by our minister, Rev Angus MacRae. Tel: (01463) 832616.

Mobile: 07 506 006 459. Email: [angusmacrae1967@gmail.com](mailto:angusmacrae1967@gmail.com)

Carrie Marlow - Women's Pastoral Worker contacts:

[carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org](mailto:carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org) or 07583 498782.

This is a guide to our two **Sunday Morning Communion Services**, held live in-person at the Free North Church. Morning Service is broadcast online the Free North YouTube channel at 11 am. The **"Sundays at 6"** evening service is on YouTube only at 6 pm, followed tonight by a time of fellowship on Zoom. Both broadcast services are available afterwards for catch-up on YouTube. Subscribe to our channel: [youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness](https://youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness).

### WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP (from Galatians 4:4-5, NLT)

*We worship God, for it is written:*

*"when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law.*

*God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law,  
so that he could adopt us as his very own children".*

*All honour and praise be to God, Amen.*

### HYMN: SAVIOUR IN A MANGER

Beyond the hills of Bethlehem

The angel choir sings.

A joyful chorus fills the skies:

"A saviour in a manger!"

The promise of a coming king,

The hope of all the earth.

To dwell within our broken world,

The saviour in a manger.

*Rejoice, the Lord has come.*

*Rejoice, the promised son.*

*Rejoice, the saving one,*

*Has come to pay our ransom.*

*The saviour in a manger.*

A treasure for the longing soul,

His peace within our hearts.

We sing the glory of the Son,

Our saviour in a manger!

*Words Alanna Glover and Emu Music 2020. Song #  
7139623. Recording by Alanna Glover, Phil Percival, Sam  
Glover, Liv Chapman. CCL License No. 616262. Streaming  
No. 324811.*

### PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Praying for sister churches in DeSABLE (Western PEI, Canada) & CALLANISH (Lewis).

### WHAT GIVES YOU HOPE AT CHRISTMAS VIDEO

Thanks to everyone who sent a video clip to Carrie. The video is now being edited and will be shared in the coming week online and at our services next weekend. Once published please do share on social media.

## BIBLE READING: MATTHEW 2:11-23

<sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. <sup>13</sup> When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, 'take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.' <sup>14</sup> So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, <sup>15</sup> where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'Out of Egypt I called my son.' <sup>16</sup> When Herod realised that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. <sup>17</sup> Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: <sup>18</sup> 'A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.' <sup>19</sup> After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt <sup>20</sup> and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead.' <sup>21</sup> So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, <sup>23</sup> and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

### HYMN: WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

What Child is this, Who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear, for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross he bore for me, for you.

Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
Come peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

Raise, raise a song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby,  
Joy, joy for Christ is born,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

*Words William Chatterton Dix (1865). Tune: Greensleeves.  
Sung by the Norwegian soprano Sissel Kyrkjebø.  
CCL License No. 616262. Streaming No. 324811.*

### SERMON: MATTHEW 2:13 – KILLING CHRISTMAS

Today's carol is less well known, and probably not in your top 10. "What Child Is This" was composed by an English poet, William Dix, in 1865. It is simple and beautiful, especially when sung to the old folk tune *Greensleeves*. The best carols take seriously the dangers faced by Jesus and his purpose for being born. Jesus is the child who came to die. *Why lies He in such mean estate, Where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christian, fear, for sinners here, The silent Word is pleading. Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross he bore for me, for you. Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The Babe, the Son of Mary. 1). JESUS IN DANGER, AND DANGEROUS.* Herod was a threat to Jesus, but King Jesus was an greater threat to him and to everyone who opposes God's rule. Matthew's gospel unfolds a tale of increasing hostility and opposition towards Jesus, leading to the cross. Will Jesus rule over us, or will we try to act like kings ourselves? Yet there were some,

like the Magi, who recognised Jesus as King and gave him suitable honour. **2). JESUS IN PROPHECY, AND IN CONTROL.** Matthew 2 is about the first attempt to kill Christmas. The infant Jesus looked weak and vulnerable, but in reality, his Kingdom was invincible. As predicted by prophets like Hosea, Jesus and his family found safe refuge in Egypt, and later in lowly Nazareth. Jeremiah 31 had predicted the slaughter of innocent children in Bethlehem, in the same chapter promising hope and eternal life. God orders and guides all history, leading Jesus to his cross and our salvation. The ultimate cure for our weeping and lamentation is found in Jesus. He takes away our guilt and sorrows by his new covenant gift of hope and eternal life.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION, DECLARATION OF FAITH & COMMUNION

Reading of 1 Corinthians 11. Silent prayer of Confession, followed by a declaration of faith.

*Minister: Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith.*

*ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.*

*Minister: Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us.*

*ALL: Therefore let us keep the feast.*

### SHARING IN COMMUNION

#### PSALM 116:13-19 (SCOTTISH PSALTER)

I'll of salvation take the cup,  
on GOD's name will I call:  
I'll pay my vows now to the LORD  
before his people all.

Dear in GOD's sight is his saints' death.  
Thy servant, LORD, am I;  
Thy servant sure, thine handmaid's son:  
my bands thou didst untie.

Thank-off'rings I to thee will give,  
and on GOD's name will call.  
I'll pay my vows now to the LORD  
before his people all;

Within the courts of GOD's own house,  
within the midst of thee,  
O city of Jerusalem.  
Praise to the LORD give ye.

*John MacAulay & Chris MacLeod, recorded at the Free North Church. Words: The Scottish Psalter, 1650.*

### BENEDICTION

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**SUNDAY AT SIX, live evening worship on our YOUTUBE CHANNEL, from 6 PM tonight.**

***Forgive Like God - Ephesians 4:30-5:2.***

Followed by a Zoom fellowship at 6.30 pm with **Rev Duncan Peters**, Glasgow.

**THANKS:** Tina and Dave Fraser would like to thank the Free North church family for their prayers, cards, flowers and phone calls during her illness. It was very much appreciated and uplifting to us both.

### DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

**IN-PERSON WORSHIP AT THE FREE NORTH:** We now offer **TWO morning services** each Sunday, the first at **10 am** (in the Church Hall for 40 minutes, and open to all) and the second at **11 am** (in the church, still subject to a weekly alphabetical split by surname). The split pattern in the next few weeks is: Sundays 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> December and 10<sup>th</sup> January - surnames **Macl to Z**. Sundays 20<sup>th</sup> December and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January - surnames **A to MacK**. Sunday School is only available at the 11 am service. Families with children are welcome to attend each Sunday. Visitors and folk who cannot attend when it is their "turn" will be welcomed

whenever they are able to attend. We do not wish to exclude anyone who wishes to attend or to put pressure on anyone to return, for example if they are in a high-risk group or have health concerns. Online worship will continue to be provided at 11 am and 6 pm each Sunday for those worshipping at home. Access to both morning services is by the Church Street Lane entrance. The 10 am service will exit by the Church Hall lane leading to Church Street to avoid congestion between those exiting and others arriving. **Please DO NOT attend church if you experience any symptoms of Covid-19.** We maintain a discrete record of all who attend for contact tracing. When you come to church try to arrive in good time and bring a face covering (unless exempt). Bring your own water bottle and any books, bibles, or children's toys and materials that you may require. Worshippers may be seated with household members or with someone in their social "bubble".

**COMMUNION:** We will share in communion at the 10 am and 11 am services today. The bread and wine is prepared following strict guidance for hygiene by a person with a Food Handling Certificate. Individual servings of bread and wine will be placed at the end of each pew in use from the outset of the service or on chairs placed close to the seating in the church hall. Placing the bread and wine close to communicants prevents any need to pass common plates and cups around the building. If you require gluten-free bread, we suggest you bring this with you to the service to minimise handling. We will share in Communion next on Sundays 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**Tuesday:** The Deacons' Court will meet on Zoom at 7.30 pm (usual log-on details).

**Wednesday Home Groups:** Various Home Groups meet online at 7.30 pm. The Central Group uses the usual Zoom log-on and passwords. This month we have a Christmas study on John chapter 1. See the additional page for details of the study.

**Thursday:** Women's Bible Study, 10.30 am and 7.45 pm.

**Next Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December:** Join us for morning worship in the hall at 10 am; for a Christmas Family Service in the Church at 11 am; and online on YouTube at 6 pm for a Carol Service.

**Congratulations to John MacAulay** as he becomes Presbytery Clerk, and to **Brian Cameron** as he becomes our new Session Clerk. Pray for these men as they give leadership and serve the body of Christ.

**Year-End Finances:** A letter is available (attached) from our Treasurer giving an update on our giving to the central funds of the Free Church. Sincere thanks to all who have supported our work in this most difficult year. To donate visit our website (PayPal logo) or contact our treasurer, Mrs Barbara Macphail, 31 Towerhill Avenue, IV2 5FX. (01463 794622, [treasurer@freenorthchurch.org](mailto:treasurer@freenorthchurch.org)).

**Prayer:** Pray for parents in our Church family, for patience and wisdom in raising their children, that they might grow as disciples and that their lives may be shaped by the gospel. Ask the Lord to help parents prioritise Sundays and prayer with and for their children. Remember Vina Campbell who has been unwell. Pray for opportunities to share hope and the message of salvation at Christmas and in the coming year.

**The Record magazine:** We will order back-copies of the *Record* for subscribers. Available to download from: [freechurch.org/resources/magazines](http://freechurch.org/resources/magazines). New subscriptions will run from January 2021. Advise Martin MacLean at the Church Office to cancel a subscription or set up a new subscription.

**Give a Book this Christmas:** CYC has a Christian bookstall open on Saturdays (2 – 4 pm) and on Tuesdays and Thursdays (10 – 11 am). See the CYC Facebook page for more.

If you need help of any sort, we would love to hear from you. Contact the minister (07 506 006 459; [angusmacrae1967@gmail.com](mailto:angusmacrae1967@gmail.com)), any elder or deacon, or the church office ([office@freenorthchurch.org](mailto:office@freenorthchurch.org)).

## The Free North – Christmas Home Groups – 7.30 pm - 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

We met on Zoom. PLEASE READ JOHN 1:1-18. In your groups you can discuss the following questions, or if you prefer just choose 1 or 2 questions and get a group member to share their testimony.

- 1). What does John want you to know about Jesus (from verses 1-5)?
  
- 2). What are the similarities / differences between John 1:1-5,9 and the creation story in Genesis 1:1-3?
  
- 3). Thinking about John 1:5, what kind of darkness has Jesus come to defeat? How does he do that?

In Exodus 33:18, Moses asked that he might see the glory of God. He was allowed to glimpse the back of God as his glory passed before Moses. From that time onwards God's glory appeared in the tent or tabernacle, and in the later temple. John 1:14 tells us *"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."* More literally, *"The Word became flesh and 'tabernacled' / 'pitched his tent' amongst us"*.

- 4). With that in mind, how does the coming of the Word in the flesh show you God's glory?
  
- 5). Why is knowing Jesus better than the way God revealed himself in the time of Moses? (See verses 14-18).

### **A FOCUS FOR OUR PRAYER AND PRAISE.**

Saint Augustine was a church leader in Hippo, North Africa, around 400 AD.

Reflect on his explanation of the Christmas story and turn it into prayer and praise:

"Man's Maker was made man,  
that He, Ruler of the stars,  
might nurse at his Mother's breast;  
that the Bread might hunger,  
the Fountain thirst,  
the Light sleep,  
the Way be tired on its journey;  
that the Truth might be accused of false witness,  
the Teacher be beaten with whips,  
the Foundation be suspended on wood;  
that Strength might grow weak;  
that the Healer might be wounded;  
that Life might die."



FINANCE COMMITTEE  
FREE NORTH CHURCH  
BANK STREET  
INVERNESS IV1 1QY  
Registered Charity Number SC 016901

Dear Friends,

We hope this letter finds you well and coping with the continuing restrictions on our lives. It looks like we are going to be facing these limitations for some time yet although the arrival of the vaccines has given us hope.

We recognise that these are challenging times and that some of you may be experiencing lower income due to Covid-19. This is also the case for the denomination centrally as they are currently forecasting a shortfall for this year. To meet our 2020 commitment to Edinburgh we have continued to send our monthly remittance of £6,775 to pay for a full-time minister, help with mission and training, and assisting the FCOS to help smaller and struggling congregations.

The Free North accounts to the end of November are showing a drop in general income of £3,550. In order for us to maintain our commitment to Edinburgh we would ask you, if you have not already done so, to consider making a donation before the end of December. If you are able to enhance your current contributions, over the short term, the Church would benefit greatly from such emergency funding

Free North Church Accounts at 30.11.20

General income sent to Edinburgh	£74,525
General income donated	£70,975
Free North Church shortfall	£ 3,550

**Giving:**

Direct payments/standing orders can be made to the bank account:

Sort Code: 82-65-18 - Account: 40246657 - Name of Account: Free North Church

Donations can also be made by using the Donate button on our website - <http://freenorthchurch.org>

If you would like to give offerings through cheque, these can be made payable to Free North Church and posted to:  
Mrs B MacPhail, Treasurer, 31 Towerhill Avenue, Inverness IV2 5FX.  
Email: [treasurer@freenorthchurch.org](mailto:treasurer@freenorthchurch.org)

We thank you for your support of the ministry of the Free North Church.

Treasurer