



Welcome to the Free North

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP 11 am – Sunday 20th June 2021

Sunday services at 11 am & at 6 pm, both online & in-person, are led by our minister, **Rev Angus MacRae**. Contact Angus on: (01463) 832616; Mobile: 07506 006459; Email: angusmacrae1967@gmail.com. You can contact **Carrie Marlow** our **Women's Pastoral Worker** on: carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org or 07583 498782. Carrie recently moved to a new address, 6 Iona Road, Inverness, IV3 8LY.

There is no need to book for in-person worship as we have capacity for a large attendance. Services are streamed live on YouTube at 11 am and 6 pm each Sunday. Please subscribe to our channel: www.youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness. Highland Region is in Covid Protection Tier Level 1. This means we are permitted to sing songs of praise during services. The Scottish Government advises that face coverings be worn (if possible). Those leading worship and certain others are exempt from this requirement.

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP (FROM JOHN 10:27-28; REVELATION 7:17)

*Minister: Jesus said - My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.
I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.*

*ALL: For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to
springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

PSALM 25:4-9 (SING PSALMS VERSION)

O LORD, reveal to me your ways,
And all your paths help me to know.
Direct and guide me in your truth;
Instruct me in the way to go.

You are my Saviour and my God;
All day I hope in you alone.
Remember, LORD, your love and grace
Which from past ages you have shown.

Do not recall my sins of youth
Or my rebellious, evil ways;
Remember me in your great love,
For you, O LORD, are good always.

Because the LORD is just and good,
He shows his paths to all who stray.
He guides the meek in what is right
And teaches them his holy way.

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PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

This week we pray for our sister churches at **St Andrews** (ministers Rev Paul Clarke and Rev Hamish Sneddon) and **Lybster** in Caithness (vacant, cared for by Rev Howard Stone).

BIBLE READING: JOHN 10:22-42 (READ BY CARRIE MARLOW)

²² Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade. ²⁴ The Jews who were there gathered round him, saying, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.' ²⁵ Jesus answered, 'I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not

my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.' ³¹ Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, ³² but Jesus said to them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?' ³³ 'We are not stoning you for any good work,' they replied, 'but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.' ³⁴ Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your Law, "I have said you are 'gods'"? ³⁵ If he called them "gods", to whom the word of God came – and Scripture cannot be set aside – ³⁶ what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, "I am God's Son"? ³⁷ Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. ³⁸ But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.' ³⁹ Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp. ⁴⁰ Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptising in the early days. There he stayed, ⁴¹ and many people came to him. They said, 'Though John never performed a sign, all that John said about this man was true.' ⁴² And in that place many believed in Jesus.

BOOK OF THE MONTH - EXTRAORDINARY HOSPITALITY (FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE)

A new book by Carolyn Lacey, seven ways in which we can reflect God's character in the way we welcome others into our homes and into our lives, and so point people ultimately to Christ. This practical and realistic book explores how to make generous hospitality part of everyday life without becoming exhausted and overburdened. A great resource as we begin to be able to open up our homes and lives more. £6 a copy, speak to Carrie for more information. (See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cP5ztL2iZuk> for more).

HYMN: AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

John Newton (1725-1807). CCL License No. 616262.

SERMON: JOHN 10:22-42 – THE SHEPHERD AND THE BUTCHERS

John presents Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and as the Lamb of God who faced being butchered by the leadership of the Jews. During the winter festival (Dedication or Hanukkah) these unbelieving butchers challenged Jesus, with stones in their hands ready to kill him. **1). THE BUTCHERS SCORN THEIR MESSIAH.** Perhaps the 'butchers' would support Jesus in a rebellion against Rome, like the freedom fighter Judas Maccabaeus, in 164? But they rejected his spiritual claims to be Messiah. They ignored his words and deeds that revealed his divine identity. They did not respond in faith because they were not members of his flock. The old Puritans sometimes said God's sheep had two 'marks'. One mark on their ear (for listening) and one on their feet (for walking in obedience). **2). THE BUTCHERS SHUN LIFE FROM GOD'S SON.** Jesus made unique claims about himself. He was the Son of the Father, sharing the nature and authority of the one God. Was he all talk? A liar? Our faith still challenges atheists, Muslims, and all others who do not bow down to worship Jesus as God. Eternal life is God's gift for all who listen, believe and obey the Son. The example of John the Baptist should show us the way. He was no miracle worker, but everything he said about Jesus, God's Son, was true. Are you convinced yet? He speaks through scripture. Will you follow the voice of the Messiah?

ALL I HAVE IS CHRIST

I once was lost in darkest night
Yet thought I knew the way.
The sin that promised joy and life
Had led me to the grave.

I had no hope that You would own
A rebel to Your will.
And if You had not loved me first
I would refuse You still.

But as I ran my hell-bound race
Indifferent to the cost
You looked upon my helpless state
And led me to the cross.

And I beheld God's love displayed
You suffered in my place
You bore the wrath reserved for me
Now all I know is grace.

*Hallelujah! All I have is Christ.
Hallelujah! Jesus is my life.*

Now, Lord, I would be Yours alone,
And live so all might see
The strength to follow Your commands,
Could never come from me.

Oh Father, use my ransomed life,
In any way You choose.
And let my song forever be
My only boast is You.

*Hallelujah! All I have is Christ.
Hallelujah! Jesus is my life.*

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BENEDICTION

**SUNDAY AT SIX – in-person and on our YOUTUBE CHANNEL at 6 PM tonight.
HEBREWS 4:14-16 – TAKING YOUR CITY TO GOD'S THRONE OF GRACE.**

CHURCH UPDATE – ARRANGEMENTS IN COVID PROTECTION LEVEL 1

We are glad a growing number feel able to attend in-person worship services. We are also thankful to resume congregational singing once again. Please use a face-covering during indoor services (unless exempt or leading part of the service). We have determined the sanctuary seating capacity downstairs is 80 people (plus any children under 5). The upstairs gallery is available on Sunday mornings (apart from the front row) providing seating for up to an additional 100. The hall has capacity for 40 people, with space for 20 in the fellowship area. **Sunday School and Creche meets in the main church hall.** While we encourage conversation, please take care to avoid blocking doors and exits and ensure social distancing between different households. We must keep a record of attendance for 21 days. During June and July all our Wednesday evening meetings will all be in-person and on YouTube. We now have some greater freedom to meet others in our homes and gardens. With care we plan to arrange a range of activities to help us grow in fellowship and personal witness over the coming months.

DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

Thanks to all for arranging and supporting various special events for friendship and fellowship for women, men, and children, over the past few days. It is good to use our greater freedoms to encourage others.

Tuesday: The **Deacons' Court** meets (in-person at the church) on 22nd June, at 7.30 pm.

Wednesday: Join us in-person at the church and online on YouTube for **Church Night** at 7.30 pm. Please try to attend in person if you can, or to pray at home at the same time, as our church and city needs prayer.

Friday 25th - We meet online on Zoom at 11 am for 30 minutes of prayer and Bible reading using the usual Zoom log on. This online prayer time will then take a break over the summer. When it resumes after the holidays it will move to a new slot of 9 am on Friday mornings.

Next Sunday: An end of term **Family Service and Sunday School Prize Giving** is planned for 11 am next Sunday 27th June. It would be helpful for participation if the families could sit in the centre and towards the front of the church.

The June/July edition of the **Record** is now available for subscribers and can be collected from the church.

Copies of **Explore** daily bible reading notes are now available (for July-September, suggested donation £3).

Ladies' Book Group: Over the summer we're going to be taking our book of the month, *Extraordinary Hospitality (For Ordinary People)*, and getting together to chat about the questions at the end of each chapter - 7 chapters over 7 weeks, starting the week beginning the 28th June. You can either come along to one of the planned times each week or just chat it through with a friend over a coffee. Days/times will be advertised next week. Get in touch with Carrie for more (carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org or 07583 498782).

Our next **Communion** is on Sunday 11th July. The Kirk Session recently agreed to celebrate communion more frequently, usually on the second Sundays of February, April, June, July, September, and November. A few times a year we will have a guest preacher for communion. These weekends will often include a Saturday evening preparatory service. We may hold additional communions occasionally (for example around special occasions such as a joint service or around New Year).

The **Guys Group** will resume on Monday 23rd August. We have agreed to read together "**Disciplines of a Godly Man**" by Kent Hughes as a guide to our discussion. Copies are available at church (or can be delivered to your home). For our next gathering read pages 31-45. The books cost £9. Pop a marked envelope in the offering plate or send directly to the treasurer.

Prayer: We pray for our young people and their families as we head towards summer. We pray for the church plant at Merkinch and all our mission partners. Pray that the Free North would continue to be a warm and caring place showing the love of Christ in pastoral care. Pray especially for the office-bearers and for Carrie, and for all with a pastoral ministry, as they seek to help and encourage and care for all in the church family, especially any who are lonely, sick or housebound. As we have more opportunities to meet with others, pray that we would be making the most of our friendships with non-Christians. Pray for courage and wisdom in sharing our faith with those we meet.

Praying for Thirty by Thirty. The Free Church has a vision to plant 30 new churches by 2030. Pray for Neil MacMillan, Sarah Johnson and David Meredith at the church office supporting Churches and Church Planters around Scotland. This year Duncan Murchison should be joining the Craig Anderson should be working with a new plant in Helensburgh plant, Robin Silson should be leading a new church in Winchburgh, West Lothian, and Galashiels. 37 trained Church Planters and around £6 million in finance will be needed this decade, but our God is able.

Supporting our work: Thank you to all who give generously and sacrificially to maintain and develop the work of our church and to extend God's Kingdom. If you wish to give regularly our "Free North Church" Bank account is 82-65-18, account number 40246657. Or you can donate at our website (PayPal logo). Direct any enquiries to Mrs Barbara Macphail: treasurer@freenorthchurch.org. Donations can be for our general fund, for a specific project (such as the Women's Worker, or the Live Stream project) or earmarked for our local Congregational Development Fund.