



Welcome to the Free North

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP 11 am – Sunday 18th July 2021

Sunday services are at 11 am & at 6 pm, both online & in-person. Contact our minister, **Rev Angus MacRae**, 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.

There is no need to book for in-person worship as we have capacity for a large attendance (80 downstairs plus children under 5, 100 in the balcony, 40 in the hall, 20 in the fellowship area). Please subscribe to our YouTube channel to follow live services: www.youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness. In Covid Protection Tier Levels 1 and 0 congregational singing is permitted. For now the Scottish Government advises that face coverings be worn for worship indoors, unless exempt from this requirement.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Free North. Today we give a particular welcome **Rev John Wilson**, who will lead our morning service at 11 am and to **Rev John Murdo MacDonald**, who will lead our Sunday at Six service tonight.

CALL TO WORSHIP (FROM PSALM 46)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

*Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.*

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.

God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Amen.

SING PSALMS 46a:1-5

God is our refuge and our strength,
our ever-present aid;
And therefore, though the earth gives way,
we will not be afraid.

Though mountains fall into the sea,
though waters foam and roar,
We will not fear, though mountains quake
as waves engulf the shore.

A river flows, whose streams delight
the city of our God—
The holy place, in which the LORD
Most High has his abode.

God is within his holy place;
the city will not yield,
For God will come at break of day
to be her help and shield.

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PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Today we pray for sister churches at **Kinloch (Lewis)** (Rev Paul Murray) and **Gardenstown New Church, Banff** (Rev Robin Gray).

TALK TO CHILDREN

BIBLE READING: JOHN 3:1-36

¹ Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.' ³ Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.' ⁴ 'How can someone be born when they are old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!' ⁵ Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.' ⁹ 'How can this be?' Nicodemus asked. ¹⁰ 'You are Israel's teacher,' said Jesus, 'and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.' ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God. ²² After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptised. ²³ Now John also was baptising at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptised. ²⁴ (This was before John was put in prison.) ²⁵ An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. ²⁶ They came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan – the one you testified about – look, he is baptising, and everyone is going to him.' ²⁷ To this John replied, 'A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, "I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him." ²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰ He must become greater; I must become less.' ³¹ The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. ³³ Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. ³⁴ For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. ³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

SONG: HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US

How deep the Father's love for us;
How vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.

How great the pain of searing loss;
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.

It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life;
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.

Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart –
His wounds have paid my ransom.

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SERMON: JOHN 3 – BE CONVINCED, GOD LOVES YOU.

SONG: HIS MERCY IS MORE

What love could remember no wrongs we have
done?
Omniscient, all knowing, he counts not their sum.
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore.
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more.

What patience would wait as we constantly
roam?
What father, so tender, is calling us home?
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor.
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more.

What riches of kindness he lavished on us.

His blood was the payment, his life was the cost.
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford.
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more.

*Praise the Lord His mercy is more.
Stronger than darkness, new every morn.
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more.*

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BENEDICTION

SUNDAY AT SIX – live in-person and on our YOUTUBE CHANNEL at 6 PM tonight.

Preacher – Rev John Murdo MacDonald
John 12:1-11 and John 20:30-31.
Praise: Psalm 95:1-6 & 'I Stand Amazed'.

CHURCH STAFF HOLIDAYS

Carrie, our women's worker, is away on holiday until the 26th July. She will respond to messages when she returns. Angus, our minister, should be back from a short break from this Tuesday. Contact Brian Cameron the Session Clerk in a pastoral emergency. 07 707 540 391 / bdcameron77@googlemail.com.

MEAL TRAIN FOR THE MACLEOD FAMILY

We would like to invite you to provide meals for Eilidh and Seumas Macleod and their 2 little girls, Norah and Miriam. The arrival of the latest addition to their family is expected very soon! This can be done through the **Meal Train app** or you can contact **Anna MacRitchie** 07 724 761 629 or **Carrie Marlow** 07 583 498 782 if you have any difficulties. The link to the Meal Train app is <https://mealtrain.com/ve72q6>. Eilidh has asked for meals to be provided from **Saturday 24th July to Friday 6th August**, and if possible, please avoid lamb or fish dishes! Thank you for your help and prayers.

SUMMER BIOGRAPHIES

This summer we want to highlight some brilliant biographies for young and old. From Nazi concentration camps to Premier League Football, whether in Edinburgh or an African jungle, these books encourage and inspire with the stories of brothers and sisters who testify to God's faithfulness in every circumstance. Check out the selection on the resource table at church. An information sheet with information about the books and prices is available. Please get in touch if you need books to be delivered to you.

DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

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.

Ladies' Book Group: Over the summer we are reading *Extraordinary Hospitality (For Ordinary People)* and getting together to chat about the questions at the end of each chapter. This week we'll be looking at chapter four. Meet up in-person this Tuesday 20th at 10.30 am (at Vina Campbell's home, 14 Blackpark Terrace). Next week you are invited to meet in-person on Tuesday 27th at 10.30am, at Carrie's (6 Iona Road) to chat over chapter 5. Carrie will also host a Zoom discussion of chapter 5 on Thursday 29th at 7.30 pm. Get in touch for log-on details.

Tuesday 27th July – Our **Elders** meet in person at 7.00 pm the church (with an option to join on Zoom) for prayer, fellowship and equipping. Please read "*Church Elders*", chapter 5, pages 71-83.

The **Guys Group** will resume on Monday 23rd August. We are to reading "*Disciplines of a Godly Man*" by Kent Hughes. 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.

Fellowship times on Zoom: We hope to arrange some online fellowships, about once a month, particularly for the benefit of those who cannot come to in-person fellowship events. Philip Rose from OM will join us at 7.30 pm on Sunday 29th August.

Copies of **Explore** daily bible reading notes are now available (for July-September, suggested donation £3). This is a great help to get into the habit of reading and apply God's word every day.

Prayer: Keep in your prayers all those away on holiday and all those in need of renewal and refreshing. Pray for new believers and those young in the faith. Pray for our children and young people, and for all who have received baptism as a sign of God's covenant of faithfulness and love. Remember Eilidh and Seumas Macleod as they wait for the birth of their child. Lift up to God the sick and the suffering, particularly Annette MacLean. Pray for the speakers, staff and volunteers and for all participating in the 2021 Keswick Convention.

Supporting our work: Thank you to all who give generously to maintain and develop the work of our church. You can donate at our website (PayPal logo), in the offering plate, or directly to our "Free North Church" bank account (82-65-18, a/c number 40246657). Direct enquiries to Mrs Barbara Macphail: treasurer@freenorthchurch.org. Donations can be for our general fund, a specific project (such as the Women's Worker, or Live Stream project) or earmarked for our local Congregational Development Fund.