



Welcome to the Free North

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP 11 am – Sunday 22nd August 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.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Free North, particularly if you are with us for the first time or exploring the Christian faith. We would love to help you become part of the Christian family. We usually stand for our praise songs and Psalms and remain seated for the majority of the service. Refreshments are served in the church hall after morning and evening services. Younger children will be invited to leave for age-appropriate activities part-way through morning service. There is no need to book a place to attend. A small area at the back on both sides of the church is reserved for those who wish to be seated in a social distancing zone. The Government advises the use of face coverings indoors for adults, unless exempt. For live online worship subscribe to our YouTube channel at: www.youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness.

CALL TO WORSHIP (FROM PSALM 89:1-2,8)

*I will sing of the Lord's great love for ever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. Who is like you, Lord God Almighty?
You, Lord, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you. Amen.*

HYMN: TELL OUT MY SOUL

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his Word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has
done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy name - the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to
flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his Word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!

*Words & Music by Timothy Dudley-Smith © Jubilate
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PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Today we pray for sister churches in **Thurso** (vacant but cared for by Rev Howard Stone), and **Murray River** on the east side of Prince Edward Island, Canada (Rev Peter Aiken).

TALK TO CHILDREN & THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711). Melody – The Old Hundredth. CCL License No. 616262.

BIBLE READING: EXODUS 1:1-17

¹ Moses answered, 'What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, "The Lord did not appear to you"?' ² Then the Lord said to him, 'What is that in your hand?' 'A staff,' he replied. ³ The Lord said, 'Throw it on the ground.' Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. ⁴ Then the Lord said to him, 'Reach out your hand and take it by the tail.' So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. ⁵ 'This,' said the Lord, 'is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – has appeared to you.' ⁶ Then the Lord said, 'Put your hand inside your cloak.' So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, the skin was leprous – it had become as white as snow. ⁷ 'Now put it back into your cloak,' he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh. ⁸ Then the Lord said, 'If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first sign, they may believe the second.' ⁹ But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.' ¹⁰ Moses said to the Lord, 'Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.' ¹¹ The Lord said to him, 'Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord?' ¹² Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.' ¹³ But Moses said, 'Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.' ¹⁴ Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and he said, 'What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you. ¹⁵ You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. ¹⁶ He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. ¹⁷ But take this staff in your hand so that you can perform the signs with it.'

SING PSALMS 77:11-14,20 (CM)

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.

You have redeemed your people, Lord,
with your almighty arm;
Jacob's and Joseph's children you
delivered from all harm.

Your people, like a flock of sheep,
you guided every day;
By Moses' and by Aaron's hand
you led them on the way.

SERMON: EXODUS 4 – DESPITE OUR EXCUSES, GOD CALLS US BY NAME

In Exodus 3 & 4 we see two patterns common in the Bible. God's WORDS usually come BEFORE the evidence of his actions; and OUR RESPONSE is often fear, excuses and unbelief. **1). GOD CALLS THE IMPERFECT – WE ARE CALLED BY NAME.** God said GO, promising to be with Moses and that Israel would believe. But Moses kept coming up with arguments and objections, before flatly refusing his calling. Perhaps his fear is understandable. Like Moses, we too are filled with many fears. But our weakness and our imperfections are not a barrier to God. He can still use us, and we must obey his call on our life. **2). GOD IS STRONG AND WILLING – EVEN WHEN WE ARE NOT.** God gave Moses three miraculous signs and wonders. They should have given him confidence to obey God's word. The signs would also witness to the elders and people of Israel (who would believe) and witness to Pharaoh and the Egyptians (who would not believe). The signs

were not cheap conjuring tricks, but meaningful signs. They highlighted the might of the true God over false idols. The serpent symbol of Pharaoh and the divine river of Egypt would be humbled and defeated by the LORD, and his miraculous signs. How is God growing your confidence and faith in his word? Where do you see him working? Simply trust and obey the strong and willing God. You may feel inadequate, but God is strong. As Romans 8 teaches, if God is FOR us, who can be against us?

PARAPHRASE: I'M NOT ASHAMED TO OWN MY LORD

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honour of his word,
The glory of his cross.

Jesus, my God! I know his Name,
His Name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands
Until that final hour.

Then he'll make known my worthless name
Before his Father's face,
And in the new Jerusalem
Appoint to me a place.

*Words by Isaac Watts adapted from Scottish Paraphrase 54
and 2 Timothy 2:12. This version © Praise Trust 2000 (CM).*

BENEDICTION

**SUNDAY AT SIX – live in-person and on our YOUTUBE CHANNEL at 6 PM tonight.
Hebrews 9:14-28. The Gospel for Inverness – Jesus Our Mediator, Jesus Our Inheritance.**

THANKS FROM MCKENZIE FAMILY

Robert, Elsa & Helen McKenzie sincerely thank the congregation for all tokens of sympathy extended to them prior to and after the death of Sandy, Elsa's brother. We do appreciate very much the family attitude of the congregation in the Free North, and the sermon on John 11:1-16, *Falling Asleep – the New Name for Death*.

DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

Road Closures: We hope the Etape Loch Ness cycling event will not inconvenience you as several roads in the city are closed today. From Monday 23rd part of Church Street (to the rear of the two Free North lanes) will be closed for essential sewer repairs. This will prevent vehicular access to Church Street on Wednesday and possibly next weekend. We advise folk to adjust travel plans and allow extra time if travelling by car.

On Sunday mornings there is a **creche** in the hall. **Sunday School** resumes today for those aged 4 and upwards, on the theme *"The Best Book in the World"*. The **Youth Fellowship** resumes in the CYC tonight.

Monday: 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). We meet on Zoom at 10 am and meet in person at 7 pm at Stewart Vant's new home, 5 Porterfield Bank. Please read pages 31-45. The books cost £9. Pop a marked envelope in the offering plate or send directly to the treasurer.

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. We wish to support those who take part in midweek worship from their homes. This week we again offer a **Zoom prayer time** immediately after the YouTube stream stops, for any who wish to share in prayer with others from their homes. Please watch the service on YouTube at 7.30 pm and then use the usual Zoom details to have fellowship and prayer online with others from around 8 pm.

Thursday: Road to Recovery meets in the fellowship area at 7.30 pm. Details from Martin MacLean.

The **Scottish Northern Convention** is online this year, broadcast from Dingwall Free Church on YouTube. There will be four evening meetings on the Book of Ruth, this Monday 23rd to Thursday 26th August at 7.30 pm, and available afterwards to listen again. The preachers are all Highland ministers, Rev Calum Iain MacLeod, Rev Kenny Ross, Rev David Scott and Rev Andrew MacLeod.

There is an **Open House** at 19 Mingary Crescent this on Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm. Drop in for a coffee and chat or just to see the new manse. The road is not on Google maps yet but is by 89 Eilean Donan Road.

Mason Holmes will be baptised by his grandfather, Rev Colin MacLeod, next Sunday 29th August. We keep Mason and all his family in our prayers along with all the children in our congregation.

Zoom Fellowship: Join us on Zoom next Sunday 29th August at 7.30 pm for news from our mission partners in **OM**. **Philip Rose** will update us.

Our **Ladies' Bible Study** restarts on Tuesday 31st August at 10.30 am and 7.45 pm, meeting fortnightly. Over this term we'll be studying the *Letters to the Seven Churches in Revelation 2-3*. More details and a Study Guide will be available next Sunday. Please get in touch with Carrie for more information on carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org or 07583 498782.

Praise Night: Join us for an evening of praise and testimony from 6.30 pm on Friday 3rd September.

Communion: We will next share in Communion on Sunday 5th September. We often welcome new church members at communion. If you have come to faith in Jesus and wish to profess your faith publicly for the first time or wish to transfer church membership to the Free North, please speak to Angus or any elder.

Week of Prayer: Times of prayer will be arranged from Monday 6th to Friday 10th September, as we lift up the spiritual needs of our city and nation to God.

Prayer: Please pray for our elders in their leadership and pastoral care roles, and for our minister, Angus, and our Women's Pastoral Worker, Carrie. Pray for much wisdom and unity. Pray for Chris Davidson and his team church planting in the Merkinch. Pray for God to be at work in our schools and among our young people. Pray for those who are unwell, struggling in body or mind, and for all experiencing spiritual struggles and social anxiety after 18 months of Covid restrictions. Give thanks that Tina Fraser is recovering well and clear of cancer. Pray for those in the church family who are retired, that they will see the God's blessing on each day using their time and talents for his glory. Pray for those with struggle with loneliness and singleness, that they would find daily comfort and joy in the Lord. Donnie MacLeod and the Faith Mission are on mission in the Uists at this time. Please keep in prayer those suffering and facing persecution and violence in Afghanistan, and our friends in the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India, who report persecution of new converts by militant Hindus. Pray that the Lord would help us to share our faith, blessing our attempts to reach others, so that many people would be introduced to Jesus, join our gatherings, see him at work in the lives of his people, and put their faith in His saving work. Pray that our church would grow as a friendly and welcoming community helping newcomers to find a spiritual home in the heart of the City.

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.