



# Welcome to the Free North

a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland

## A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WORSHIP 11 am – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September 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](mailto:angusmacrae1967@gmail.com). You can contact **Carrie Marlow**, our **Women's Pastoral Worker**, on: [carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org](mailto: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. Refreshments are served in the 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 sit in a social distancing zone. Please use a face coverings indoors, unless exempt. For live online worship subscribe to our YouTube channel at: [www.youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness](https://www.youtube.com/c/FreeNorthChurchInverness). **This morning we share in Communion. Any visitors who know and love Jesus and belong to his church are welcome to take part.**

### CALL TO WORSHIP (FROM REVELATION 1:4-5,6b)

*Minister: Grace to you and peace from Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come;*

*ALL: Even Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.*

*Minister: Grace to you and peace from Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come;*

*ALL: To Him Who loves us and has freed us from our own sins by His blood – be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.*

### SING PSALMS 98:1-6 (CM)

O sing a new song to the LORD,  
for wonders he has done;  
His right hand and his holy arm  
the victory have won.

The LORD declared his saving work  
and made it to be known;  
To all the nations of the world  
his righteousness is shown.

His steadfast love and faithfulness  
he has remembered well—  
The covenant he made with them,  
the house of Israèl.

And all the nations of the earth  
have seen what God has done—  
Our God who brings deliverance  
by his right hand alone.

Acclaim the LORD, O all the earth;  
shout loudly and rejoice.  
Make music and be jubilant;  
to him lift up your voice.

With harp make music to the LORD;  
with harp his praises sing.  
With trumpet and with horn rejoice  
before the LORD, the King.

## PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Today we pray for sister churches in **North Harris** (minister, Rev David MacLeod), and **Dunoon & Strachur**.

### BIBLE READING: EXODUS 5:1-23

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, 'This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: "Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness."' <sup>2</sup> Pharaoh said, 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go.' <sup>3</sup> Then they said, 'The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword.' <sup>4</sup> But the king of Egypt said, 'Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labour? Get back to your work!' <sup>5</sup> Then Pharaoh said, 'Look, the people of the land are now numerous, and you are stopping them from working.' <sup>6</sup> That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and overseers in charge of the people: <sup>7</sup> 'You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. <sup>8</sup> But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, "Let us go and sacrifice to our God." <sup>9</sup> Make the work harder for the people so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies.' <sup>10</sup> Then the slave drivers and the overseers went out and said to the people, 'This is what Pharaoh says: "I will not give you any more straw. <sup>11</sup> Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced at all.'" <sup>12</sup> So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw. <sup>13</sup> The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, 'Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw.' <sup>14</sup> And Pharaoh's slave drivers beat the Israelite overseers they had appointed, demanding, 'Why haven't you met your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?' <sup>15</sup> Then the Israelite overseers went and appealed to Pharaoh: 'Why have you treated your servants this way? <sup>16</sup> Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, "Make bricks!" Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people.' <sup>17</sup> Pharaoh said, 'Lazy, that's what you are – lazy! That is why you keep saying, "Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord." <sup>18</sup> Now get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks.' <sup>19</sup> The Israelite overseers realised they were in trouble when they were told, 'You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day.' <sup>20</sup> When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, <sup>21</sup> and they said, 'May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.' <sup>22</sup> Moses returned to the Lord and said, 'Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me? <sup>23</sup> Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all.'

### SING PSALMS 31:19-24 (LM)

Your goodness, LORD, is very great—  
Prepared for those who fear your name.

You show your goodness openly  
To all who your protection claim.

Your presence hides and shelters them  
From those who plot to take their life,  
And in your tent you keep them safe  
From evil tongues that stir up strife.

The LORD be praised because he showed  
The wonder of his love to me,

When in a city I was trapped,  
Surrounded by the enemy.

In my alarm I rashly said  
That I was hidden from your eyes;  
But when I called to you for help,  
In grace you listened to my cries.

O love the LORD, all you his saints!  
The faithful will be kept by God,  
But he will give the proud their due.  
Be strong, take heart; hope in the LORD.

### SERMON: EXODUS 5 – BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW, HEARTS WITHOUT GOD

Exodus 5 is more than a story about oppressed slaves forced to make 'bricks without straw'. It is more than a tale of suffering, victimhood, and injustice. This is also the story of the competing loyalties that drive every human heart. The message is in three parts. **1). GET TO KNOW THE CHARACTERS IN THIS DRAMA.**

**2). GET TO KNOW YOUR OWN HEART BETTER. 3). GET TO KNOW THE ALWAYS FAITHFUL GOD.** Who is Lord of your life? Pharaoh? This world? Or the God who demands your loyalty and worship.

#### SONG: WHEN I SURVEY

When I survey the wondrous cross  
on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count as loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
save in the cross of Christ my God;  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,

sorrow and love flow mingled down:  
did e'er such love and sorrow meet?  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were an offering far too small;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all!

*Isaac Watts (1674-1748). CCL License No. 616262.  
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#### SHARING IN COMMUNION

##### DOXOLOGY SONG: NOW TO HIM WHOSE POWER IS ABLE

Now to him whose power is able  
to protect our stumbling feet,  
and prepare our souls for glory  
there with joy our King to meet  
so that we may stand before him  
faultless at his judgement seat—

To the only God our Saviour,  
through our Lord Christ Jesus' name,  
be dominion, power, glory,  
majesty and matchless fame,  
from before the world's foundation,  
now and evermore the same!

*Words Dr Nick Needham © Praise Trust, 2000.  
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#### BENEDICTION

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**SUNDAY AT SIX – live in-person and on our YOUTUBE CHANNEL at 6 PM tonight.  
Hebrews 10:19-39. The Gospel for Inverness – Don't Give Up: Encourage One Another!**

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#### DIARY, NEWS & PRAYER

Our sincere thanks to Chris, to Danny, the children, singers and musicians and everyone who took part in the excellent Praise Night held last Friday. A recording is available on the Free North YouTube channel.

On Sunday mornings there is a **creche** and **Sunday School** in the hall. A **Youth Fellowship** meets in the CYC building at 6 pm. Tea and coffee are served in the hall after both Sunday services.

**Week of Prayer - Monday 6<sup>th</sup> to Friday 10<sup>th</sup>:** We hope many will be able to come in person to pray from **9 to 10 am** (come and go as required during that hour). Donnie Macleod will lead an evening time of Prayer on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>** from 7.30 pm. The **Friday** prayer time (at 9 am) will also be available on Zoom. It will greatly encourage the church family if as many as possible try to attend as we lift up the spiritual needs of our city and nation to God, we pray for spiritual protection, a deepening commitment to the gospel, and for spiritual growth and maturity. In prayer, please ask God to send 10 new families, or families of new believers, to transform the work of our Free North Church and the Merkinch Church plant. Pray that our Young People

would continue to find ways to get stuck into church life and to form and maintain good relationships, both with Christians and with non-Christians, and not depart from all they have been taught

**Tuesday:** The Deacons' Court meets in the fellowship area at 7.30 pm.

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

**September Book of the month - *Side by Side*** by Ed Welch. Everyone needs help sometimes but often we don't feel equipped to help others, or know how to ask for help. *Side by Side* seeks to help us walk with one another in wisdom and love as we share our burdens with one another. It shows us how God can and does work through ordinary Christians in our ordinary relationships and conversations. £7 a copy.

**Survey:** We wish to survey the congregation to help deliver Home Groups, informal events and Midweek Meetings that best meet our needs and circumstances. It would be very helpful to get your thoughts. You can complete a "Google Form" here: <https://forms.gle/NFPcsUTXHm72zsHq8>. Alternatively, paper copies are available at church, and these can be returned in an envelope through the offering plate.

**Record:** The Free Church *Record* magazine for September is now available. There are some spare copies if you would like to sample this publication.

**Zoom:** To request log-on codes see the weekly email update or email Martin at [office@freenorthchurch.org](mailto:office@freenorthchurch.org).

This term the **Ladies' Bible Study** looks at the *Letters to the Seven Churches in Revelation 2-3*. Pick up a **Study Guide**. Contact Carrie on [carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org](mailto:carrie.marlow@freenorthchurch.org) or 07583 498782 for information or to get a copy delivered. Future dates are 14th & 28th Sept., 12th & 26th Oct., 9th & 23rd Nov. and 7th December.

The **Guys Groups** meet this term on Mondays (13<sup>th</sup> Sept.; 4<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> Oct.; 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> November; and 6<sup>th</sup> December). We are reading Kent Hughes' "***Disciplines of a Godly Man***". Copies cost £9 and are available at church or can be delivered. We meet on Zoom at 10 am and meet in person at 7 pm at various locations. For 13<sup>th</sup> September, please read pages 47-60.

**Helping with Teas and Coffees:** It is wonderful to be able to gather for fellowship over tea and coffee after services. There is a sign-up sheet for anyone interested in helping out serving teas.

**Women for Mission (WFM) Online Conference:** Saturday 18 September, 11 am to 12.30 pm. The theme is *Salt & Light: Distinctive Christian Living in a Hostile World*. Details from [womenformission.org](http://womenformission.org). If you wish to watch in the company of others, there is an invitation to join Ann MacRae at 19 Mingary Crescent.

**Note from Jane MacLeod (01463 237310):** Coffee@Dobbies can happen again - assuming no changes to Covid restrictions. The ladies plan to meet from 10.30 am on the first and third Tuesdays of the month (i.e. 7 & 21 Sep, 05 & 19 Oct and so on). So please come along, buy your coffee and go to the quieter area to the left of the till. The aim of these informal meetings is to encourage friendship and support amongst the ladies in the congregation and all are most welcome. If you need a lift please let me know and I'll try to arrange one. It would be really good if you could bring a toiletry item (toothbrush/paste, shampoo, deodorant, etc.) for the Blythswood box appeal. We plan to fill the boxes on 26 Oct. (details to be confirmed).

**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](mailto: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.