

14TH FEBRUARY 2021

FERINTOSH PARISH CHURCH

WORSHIP AT HOME



www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk

I saw that I needed a perfect righteousness to present me without fault before God, and this righteousness was nowhere to be found but in the person of Jesus Christ. (John Bunyan)

PSALM 72: 17 - 19

His name for ever shall endure;
last like the sun it shall:
Men shall be blessed in him, and blessed
all nations shall him call.

Now blessèd be the Lord our God,
the God of Israel,
For he alone doth wondrous works,
in glory that excel.

And blessèd be his glorious name
to all eternity:
The whole earth let his glory fill.
Amen, so let it be.

PRAYER

Father, we praise You that in Your kindness You have spoken Your Word of incredible power through human means to all our hearts. May the eyes of faith see You and our hearts embrace You and may we reach out to You in love and receive the great promises of the Gospel. Be pleased, we pray, to cause us to know that today we heard You. We ask this in Jesus mighty name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

JOHN 14: 16 - 21 (NKJV)

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

OUR LORD'S PRAYER


*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.*

SERMON

Jesus refers to His appearances to the disciples after His resurrection as an event that would happen in a few days. Jesus says that His coming is in "a little while" and that it will follow His removal from the world's sight: "Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me" (John 14:19). That statement was fulfilled in the death and burial of Jesus, followed by His resurrection and appearances to the disciples, producing the very result Jesus cites here, that the disciples would finally comprehend who He was in relation to the Father.

Speaking to the disciples on Thursday night, knowing that He would be taken from them and crucified on Friday, Jesus looked ahead to the first Easter Sunday and said, "You will see me" or Jesus meant a seeing of perception: "You will perceive me". What a difference it made to the disciples when Jesus appeared among them in His resurrected body, displaying His wounds, inviting them to touch Him, and even eating a fish to prove that He was really alive (Luke 24:39-43).

Remember, Jesus invited Thomas to place his fingers in Jesus' side and hands to enable him to believe (John 20:27), prompting the model profession of faith: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). Having seen Jesus in the flesh, the same Peter who denied Him before His trial was emboldened to proclaim His resurrection in the first Christian sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:23-24). What a difference Christ's post-resurrection appearances made in the lives of the disciples: this was why He came to them so that they would know themselves not forsaken.



But there is more to Jesus' coming than his resurrection, another result was the disciples' own spiritual resurrection. This interpretation is demanded by Jesus' statement that "because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19). Having risen from the grave in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus gave spiritual life that enabled the disciples to see Him with eyes of faith. The principle in this promise may be applied to the whole range of our salvation. Because Jesus rose in resurrection life, He will raise our bodies into resurrection glory and He now grants spiritual life to those who belong to Him. "Because I live," He assures us, "you also will live" (John 14:19). His resurrection is the guarantee that they will not be overcome by death. His life means life for them.

The immediate result of Jesus' resurrection was that the disciples would perceive, as Jesus put it, "that I am in my Father" (John 14:20). The disciples' failure to understand the meaning of the cross highlighted their need for a spiritual resurrection of their own. The same is true for each of us. It is only when Christ grants us His resurrection life that we understand the truth about Him and respond in faith, joyfully trusting Him for our salvation. This granting of spiritual life from God is called our new birth, which precedes and causes faith (John 3:3).

The result of our new life is our initial, saving knowledge of Jesus. Here, Jesus says that they will know that He is in the Father. Later, Jesus says we will grow in our personal knowledge of Him as He manifests Himself, but at first, we gain the perception that He is who He said He is. It was because of Christ's unbreakable unity with the Father as the divine Son that death could not conquer Him. For while He died in His human nature, His divine nature – eternally joined in being with God the Father – was incapable of dying. This saving deity is what we know when we first believe: "that I am in my Father."

Jesus comes to us today in the gospel message and in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When He calls us to new life and faith, we too are brought into saving union with God's eternal life. Thus, when we come to know that Christ is one with the Father, we also realise that this union is in turn the pattern for the relationship between Christ and his followers.

Jesus says in full, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (John 14:20).

This is why Christians will live forever: not because we have become intrinsically immortal ourselves, independent of Christ, and certainly not because we have ourselves become divine, but because we are joined to the eternal life of the incarnate Son of God – as Paul put it, God "made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5) – and because He will live forever.

The writer of Hebrews celebrates Christ's reign, saying, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain...; you are the same, and your years will have no end" (1:10–12). Through our bond of faith with Him, Christ has granted us resurrection life so that we will live and reign with Him forever, beginning at the moment of our new birth into saving faith.

HYMN

Alas, and did my Saviour bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

*At the cross, at the cross where
I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away,
It was there by faith I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!*

Was it for sins that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree! (*Refrain*)

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do. (*Refrain*)

PRAYER

*Almighty God,
we praise You,
and through times of difficulty we trust You,
for in Jesus Christ
You have walked paths as difficult as ours,
revealing there a love that nothing defeats,
a love that carries us through.
We pray, that in these uncertain times
we might know and trust that You are with us,
our refuge and strength,
and that our faith, hope and love might be
renewed,
through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

BENEDICTION

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all this day and forevermore, Amen.

WORSHIP

As we are now in another lockdown it means that we are no longer able to meet in the church building. As well as the video recording and the Worship at Home material which will continue to be made available through the church website and Facebook page, we will start a Zoom-service on Sunday mornings. The Zoom-service will begin at 11am for about 30-40 minutes. If you would like to join the Zoom-service, please contact the Session Clerk
SessionClerk@ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk Please continue to take care and stay safe.

THE LEPROSY MISSION

If anyone would like a copy of the Leprosy Mission 2021 Prayer Diary, or a home collection box, please contact Janet Winchester on 01349 865308. Like most charities, the Leprosy Mission has suffered a drop in income, and an increase in costs due to the global pandemic, so if you can help, please consider a donation. Donations can be made direct on the Leprosy Mission Scotland website or I will be gathering together what people have collected over the year towards the end of March.

GUILD

Please remember the Guild's virtual soup lunch today (or at any other convenient time). The idea is to enjoy a bowl of your favourite soup at home - check out the Church website for a couple of recipes, if you fancy a change - and make a donation to the Guild projects.

You can make a donation direct to the Guild office by using the Donate button on the Guild section of the Church of Scotland website. In this case, the money received up to 22nd February will be divided between the six current projects, with the aim of ensuring each project receives approximately the same level of support.

Donations can also be made through Ferintosh Guild. I am happy to receive cheques made out to Ferintosh Church of Scotland Guild by post or through my letterbox at Craigdarroch, Burnside Lane, Conon Bridge, IV7 8 EX, or cash in an envelope, until the end of February. I will take all necessary precautions, before banking the money and sending one cheque to the Guild office. This money will all go to Seema's Project, which Ferintosh Guild is supporting this year.

Seema's Project aims to support the children of commercial sex workers in Puna, India with food, accommodation and education/training, as well as offering safe accommodation and the opportunity of an alternative lifestyle to some of the sex workers themselves. Pam Cairns, who leads the Scottish support of Seema's project, will give a presentation about the project via Zoom on Monday 22nd February (NOTE CHANGE OF DATE) at 3.30pm. Anyone interested is welcome to join us. Contact Elizabeth Blackburn for an invitation that will allow you to join in.

Janet Winchester, on behalf of Ferintosh Guild

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Ladies Bible Study meet on Wednesdays at 9.45am on Zoom. We are looking at five studies called Living Christianity: following Jesus in every area of life. If you'd like to join us please contact jintys@btinternet.com so an invitation can be sent to you.