

1ST MAY 2022

FERINTOSH PARISH CHURCH

WORSHIP AT HOME



www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk

C. H. Spurgeon commented, *"Atonement by the blood of Jesus is not an arm of Christian truth; it is the heart of it."* If Jesus will draw all people to Himself through His cross, then let us preach His cross.

HYMN

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death 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.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you have sent your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Word and from His lips you have instructed us in the written Word and we pray that again today our Lord Jesus in the power of His Spirit will teach us His Word. So we pray, Holy Spirit, that you will move among us as we worship at home today and from your Word you will give to each of us that specially shaped Word that meets our circumstances, that challenges our lives, that transforms our characters and that brings us to love, trust, obey and enjoy our Lord Jesus Christ more and more. This we pray for His great Name's sake. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

JOHN 12: 27 - 34

27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

28 Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again."

29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him."

30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.

31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself."

33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

34 The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how *can* You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

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

On previous occasions, God spoke from heaven in order to express His approval of Jesus. At Jesus' baptism, God's voice was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt. 3:17). God spoke similar words from heaven during Jesus' transfiguration on the mount (Mt. 17:5). In this case, God is also expressing His approval of Jesus, only now He says, "I have glorified [my name], and I will glorify it" (John 12:28). Jesus' desire for God's name to be glorified in His life has already been gratified and it will be again in His cross.

God was glorified in Jesus' birth, which is why the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest" (Lk. 2:14). God was glorified in Jesus' perfect life; from earliest childhood He had perfectly kept God's law. God was glorified in Jesus' ministry. Jesus displayed the kingdom of God in His miracles, His teaching, and His life. But it would be especially at the cross that Jesus would glorify God, displaying the perfections of attributes like His justice, mercy, wisdom and love.

When we think of works of glory, we tend to think of mankind's great achievements. The ancient world would probably have said that the most glorious achievement in construction was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. But those great gardens no longer exist and their glory has long since faded. Or we might think of military glory. Alexander the Great achieved colossal glory, yet for him it ended with his youthful death, after which his empire fragmented. A similar story might be said about the great Roman conquerors.

Today, we attach glory to the exploits of sports stars, movie stars, or corporate giants. The tabloids sell their millions on the endless stream of the fallen lives of those they only recently glorified. Yet when Jesus Christ sought to glorify His heavenly Father by His death on the cross, He attained a glory that will never end. Indeed, it is a glory that is shared and celebrated by more and more people each year, just as Jesus said, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself" (John 12:32).

In noting this, we cannot help but observe a significant difference between the way Jesus attained eternal glory for God versus the way men and women gain fleeting glory for themselves. Worldly glory is attained by ascending some kind of throne. **But Christ achieved His glory by ascending the cross.**

The cross glorified God the Father by its power to draw sinners and restore them to God. By saying, "when I am lifted up from the earth," Jesus is clearly referring to the dreadful events of the cross that would take place in a few short days. Not only would that cross glorify God's righteous judgment, but also His gracious power to draw men and women into fellowship with Himself.

In this respect, the cross is the greatest display of God's love to the world. The Puritan Jeremiah Burroughs writes: "Behold the infinite love of God to mankind and the love of Jesus Christ that, rather than God see the children of men to perish eternally, would send His Son to take our nature upon Him and thus suffer such dreadful things. Herein God shows His love... Oh, what a powerful, mighty, drawing, efficacious meditation this should be to us!"

And yet the cross's power does not consist in the sentiments it inspires in men and women's hearts. It should inspire our love to God, but because of our sin it does not. Instead, it is by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, which Christ secured by His obedience on the cross, that sinners are drawn to God.

Jesus' statement that "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself," contains a wealth of truth concerning the gospel. First, it declares the necessity of faith in His atoning death for sin. This comes through in His reference to "all people." When Jesus says He will draw all people through His cross, He does not mean that He died for everyone's forgiveness. We know this because of the Bible's frequent insistence that not all will be forgiven and saved. John's Gospel is clear that "whoever does not believe is condemned" (John 3:18). When John's Gospel refers to "all people," he means all kinds of people, from all nations and tongues. But note that Jesus says that their salvation will occur "when I am lifted up from the earth." Christ was not saying that the whole world would be saved, but that all who will be saved will be saved by looking to and relying upon Him. If you are not yet a believer, see His troubled soul as He became a curse for you, as He suffered separation from the Father, as He lovingly bore the penalty of your sins.

HYMN

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat
where Jesus answers prayer;
there humbly fall before his feet,
for none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
with this I venture nigh:
thou callest burdened souls to thee,
and such, O Lord, am I.

O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
to bear the cross and shame,
that guilty sinners, such as I,
might plead thy gracious name!

PRAYER

Our gracious God, we bless you that the heavens are full of your praise and that from the earth there is an answering chorus of worship and adoration. Our desire is that the name of the Lord should be praised throughout the earth, and we pray as we come before your throne and as you show us the power of your Word, that you would direct us afresh to the glory of your Son, that your Spirit would shine brightly upon Him, that He would take what belongs to the Lord Jesus and show it to us and fill us afresh with love for Him, with newfound trust in Him and with humble repentance for our sins. We look to you again and we pray that you would open your hand and supply each of us with what we need and direct us to your glory. This we pray for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake. 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 UPDATE

Sunday morning worship takes place at 11.00am in the church. We no longer need people to book a seat for each service as we have increased the number of available chairs. The wearing of masks in church is also no longer a legal requirement but we would ask that folk continue to do so if at all possible so as to protect everyone and reduce transmission of the Covid virus. Please continue to sanitise hands on entering and leaving the church, and dress appropriately as we will keep the front and back doors of the church open during the service to maintain ventilation.

The Sunday Zoom service is at 6.30pm. If you would like to join the Zoom service, please contact the Session Clerk by email at SessionClerk@ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk for the details.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The next meeting is on Wednesday 4th May in the Church Hall at 1.30pm. We will continue in our study of the book of Joshua with all its challenges. We will begin the fifth study entitled "Inheriting the Promised Land". covering chapters 10 to 19. It would be great if you'd join us then. We have been staying on for a time of prayer since the needs of the world and our communities are so great. Feel free to join us at 2.30pm if you'd like to join us in praying for so many issues.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN



This year's collection amounted to £110 which is an increase from last year. This will be distributed to women who can obtain macro-loans to help in their attempts to lift themselves out of poverty and educate their children to have a better chance in life. Thank you all who participate in such a worthwhile cause.

HIGHLAND FOODBANK

This month's list of required items is - long life fruit juice; UHT milk; tins of potatoes/smash; tins of custard/rice; tins of corned beef; toilet rolls (small packs); bags for life(new or used). During March Highland Foodbank was able to give enough food to 500 adults and children, which enabled them to make three meals over three days. This could only be done because of your generosity.

Your donations really make the difference to local people as to whether they eat or not. That is the reality. Thank you.

SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

We are surely all aghast at the suffering of Ukrainians, as portrayed daily by the media. In addition to our prayers, we may wonder how we can help. Now Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, Convener of the Church of Scotland's Faith Impact Forum, has written informing us that our Church has contact with The Reformed Church in Hungary, which, through its Reformed Church in Hungary Aid programme is directly involved in supporting those fleeing the war. They have indicated that the best way to provide practical help is to send money, with which they can buy locally the things people need.

Donations can be made via the Bank account below, and in view of the urgency of the situation all money received will be transferred daily to RCHA:

Royal Bank of Scotland
Church of Scotland No 1 Account
Account no 00134859
Sort Code 83 06 08
Reference: Ukraine Appeal

The Kirk Session, meeting on 3rd March, encourages anyone who is able, prayerfully to consider donating in this way.

Anyone who is unable to donate on-line or in person at any branch of the Royal Bank, may contact Janet Winchester (865308), who will assist in forwarding donations.



LEPROSY MISSION

The Leprosy Mission continues to "complete what Jesus started", aiming to SPOT IT - TREAT IT - STOP IT, eventually eradicating leprosy, its painful symptoms, disabling consequences and humiliating stigma.

Just short of £100 was recently donated by people in the congregation who put money aside throughout the year, and others have donated directly to The Leprosy Mission (Scotland), as well as buying cards and other items from TLM Trading.

The Leprosy Mission is holding a virtual Global Day of Prayer on Wednesday 11th May. Then on Saturday 4th June there is a Supporter Conference in the National Christian Outreach Centre in Perth. Details of these, and further information about the work of TLM can be found on www.leprosymission.scot or contact Janet Winchester on 01349 865308.