

Sunday 24th October 2021 E100 Living as God's People

WELCOME

First, a few notices:

- Today, Margaret is leading worship in Ettrick Kirk, and we share the same hymns, readings and theme for our service.
- As usual, at the end of the service, you will be guided out by our welcome team. Please don't rush away, but join us in the hall for coffee and chat
- Taking part this morning:
 - Elma Hendrie reading Margaret's first prayer
 - Marjory Dooley reading the bible passage
 - Glynis Wilkie with the prayers for other
 - Moira and Jamie providing our music

As we are gathered, Jesus is here. We remain sitting to sing:

HYMN 197 As we are gathered Jesus is here

As we are gathered Jesus is here

One with each other Jesus is here

Joined by the Spirit washed in the blood

Part of the body the church of God

As we are gathered Jesus is here

One with each other Jesus is here

Music by John Daniels arranged Richard Hey Lloyd

(b.1933)

And so, we come together to worship God, who we know as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

As we open our lives to the Spirit, he will cause fruit to grow. In our E100 readings this week, we will be reminded what that fruit is, so let's remind each other now, as we read the words of **Galatians 5:22 -23** together and to each other.

I'll begin, then we'll read alternate lines:

The fruit of the Spirit is love,

The fruit of the Spirit is joy,

The fruit of the Spirit is peace,

The fruit of the Spirit is patience,

*The fruit of the Spirit is kindness,
The fruit of the Spirit is goodness,
The fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness,
The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness,
The fruit of the Spirit is self-control.
Amen – may it be so in our lives*

And now, let's stand for the first hymn:

HYMN 189 Be still, for the Presence of the Lord

Be still, for the presence of the Lord the holy One is here.
Come bow before Him now, with reverence and fear.
In Him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.
He burns with holy fire, with splendour He is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant king of light.
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister His grace.
No work to hard for Him, in faith receive from Him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place..

David J. Evans (b.1957)

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION (read by Elma Hendrie)

Triumphant praise and joy, these we bring as we enter Your court with praise and thanksgiving, bowing our heads and joining in prayer, for You, O God, are gracious and Your mercy everlasting.

This is the day You have made for worship and we thank You for it. We thank You for each other, for the people we are and the places we have come from, for all that we shall become as we walk with You.

For all You have given, we praise and worship You.

Thank You for the love of Christ encircling us, Your Spirit guiding us, so that we might bring our lives before You, in praise and worship. Loving God, You are ever at work in our lives, striving to help and strengthen our world, heal and comfort, forgive and restore, undo wrongs and establish right.

For all you are doing, we praise and worship You.

Merciful God, we have not been humble. We have discouraged others from seeking You. We have not sought Your wisdom. We have been rude and selfish in our own wants and actions. We have hurt others by intended words spoken and actions not done – some known to us and others unknown to us.

We know what we have done - please forgive our faults. While we deserve only judgement You offer us grace, and the hope of life renewed. Merciful Father we praise You that through Jesus Christ we are forgiven, we are renewed, and through Him we are taught how to live and serve.

For all your forgiveness, we praise and worship You.

God of restoration, in our blindness and ignorance, You open our eyes and lead us to truth. In our arrogance and defiance, You still our souls and teach us humility. In our weakness and displacement, You protect us and lead us home. We praise You and thank You, with all our hearts.

Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us when we pray to say,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Amen.

READING

Philippians 4:2-9

Read by Marjory Dooley

²Euodia and Syntyche, please, I beg you, try to agree as sisters in the Lord. ³And you too, my faithful partner, I want you to help these women; for they have worked hard with me to spread the gospel, together with Clement and all my other fellow workers, whose names are in God's book of the living.

⁴ May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!

⁵ Show a gentle attitude toward everyone. The Lord is coming soon. ⁶ Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. ⁷ And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

⁸ In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honourable. ⁹ Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.

REFLECTION

Living as God's people - Instructions for living!

You can watch and hear Margaret's full sermon on this passage on-line, and I would encourage you to do so. Rather than reading it here, I want to pick out a few key thoughts, and allow us some time to reflect on what the Spirit might be saying to each of us (and us as a congregation, too).

The first key thought comes from verses 2 and 3: (in the Message version)

I urge Euodia and Syntyche to iron out their differences and make up. God doesn't want his children holding grudges. Remember, their names are also in the Book of Life.

Working together!

We all have different views on many matters, and most of us change our views over time. I'm pretty sure God is more concerned about what we do than what we believe. So, Paul encourages us to work together, not to let our differences divide us. Easier said than done, of course. And so we need those aspects of the Spirit's work in us that we read at the start: love, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness. These are essentials to smooth our relationships. And, to those, we should add forgiveness – perhaps the most important ingredient of all in our relationships.

We don't need lots of words to understand this! Just to remember that we are all human, all imperfect, and can ask for the grace to make our relationships work.

So let's take a few moments to bring to God our relationships:

- Family, church, workplace, neighbours
- the relationships that we find difficult
- and those that we rejoice in

[pause 30s]

The second key thought is **prayer**: verse 5 (again, from the Message)

Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns.

We are called to prayer. What should we pray for? Glynis will lead us later. There are so many things that concern us, on a personal level and on a global level.

(bell ringing)

What was that? That was the bell that Rev David Coleman (the Eco-congregation Chaplain) left us to remind us to speak out and pray about the environmental chaos that our modern lifestyle is bringing on God's creation.

What can we pray? His Holiness, Pope Francis, has recently given us a list of 11 topics that he encourages us to pray about. (and even if we disagree with him in some areas, let's **work together** where we agree).

Let's take 3 of his suggestions for now, and take a few moments in silence to bring each of these concerns to God:

1. We pray that the large mining, oil, forestry, real estate, agribusiness companies will stop destroying nature, stop polluting, and stop intoxicating people and food.

[pause 30s]

(bell)

2. We pray that the media put an end to the logic of post-truth, disinformation, defamation, slander and that sick attraction for scandal and that, instead, they seek to contribute to human fraternity.

[pause 30s]

(bell)

3. We pray that governments and all politicians work for the common good. Let them beware of listening only to the economic elite; may they be servants of the people who ask for land, shelter and work and a good life in harmony with all humanity and creation.

[pause 30s]

(bell)

Bells are associated with the call to worship and celebrations but they also have another historic function: to ring out warning. On Saturday 30th, on the eve of [COP26](#), churches across the UK are being encouraged to ring their bells for 30 minutes from 6pm. We might join in with that. The bells will be ringing out our warning to remind the delegates of the urgency of the dangers we now face.

(bell)

The final key thought, I want to briefly draw out is this: **Put it into practice**

Verse 9 (from the Message)

Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.

It's not for me to tell you what God is calling you to do. He has different things for each of us to do, at different times, and in different places. Sometimes we tie ourselves in knots trying to determine God's will. But Paul doesn't speak to us in those terms, and neither did Jesus. He calls us to love one another, to work together, to bring our concerns to God, and then just to get on with our daily living, knowing He is with us.

As Margaret puts it in her sermon, he calls us to "stand firm" and to "live well".

Let's go out this week and do that.

[pause 30s]

And now, a hymn which is a prayer for ourselves:

HYMN 536 May the mind of Christ my Saviour

May the mind of Christ my Saviour live in me from day to day,

By his love and power controlling all I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour,

So that all my see I triumph only through his power.

May the peace of God my Father rule my life in everything,

That I may be calm to comfort sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me, as the waters fill the sea;

Him exalting, self abasing, this is victory.

May I run the race before me, strong and brave to face the foe,

Looking only unto Jesus, as I onward go.

Katie Barclay Wilkinson (1859- 1928)

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Read by Glynis Wilkie

Lord God Almighty, we bow before You, in wonder, awe and praise. You who are so great want us as Your children. You do everything within Your power to show us that Your way is the only way. Help us to open ourselves to You, to experience Your Presence within us; to know the touch of Your hand upon our lives, guiding our thoughts and our actions. Lead us in Your way, O Lord, guide us by Your Spirit; change us into new people, ready

and willing to serve You and love You for the rest of our days here on this earth. Lord make us one in Your Spirit, that the church may bear Your fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit is love. We bring you a world corrupted by injustice, indifference and hatred, Lord God. A world in need of your love.

The fruit of the Spirit is joy. We bring before you a sorrowing world, full of despair and suffering. A world in need of joy.

The fruit of the Spirit is peace. We bring before you Lord God a world torn apart by warfare and inner conflict, a world in need of your peace.

The fruit of the Spirit is patience and kindness. Our world Lord God is damaged by our human, short term perspective, marred by our insensitivity and our violence. It is a world in need of discovering your patience, your kindness.

The fruit of the Spirit is goodness and faithfulness. We bring before you God a world which has been made cynical by the wrongs of humanity, a world which is empty of meaning for so many people because of lack of purpose and belief. Show us your goodness, Lord, provide us with faith.

The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness and self control. Our world is so harsh in its judgement of others, so harsh in its dealings with people. It is a world enslaved by greed and lust and violence. Bring to it Lord God your gentleness, your self control.

May your church be equipped by the power of Your Spirit to go out into this world for which we have prayed. Send us out in your name, make us willing to give all that we have to you and your work. May your church stand out in our society proclaiming your love, your way of living. May it be prepared to battle and stand up to the challenge.

We pray for our own community, the people we know and love. In the silence we bring you the week that has just passed, we bring you the week that is to come, the things which have and will happen, the people we have and will meet.

We give you thanks for all the people who have helped us in our walk of faith, and for those who are now with you. We join our prayers and our praise to the great company of angels who are praising you in Heaven. In Jesus Name, Amen

So, we go out to live well for our Lord, with the hymn:

HYMN 202 Stand up and bless the Lord

Stand up and bless the Lord

Ye people of His choice

Stand up and bless the Lord your God

With heart and soul and voice

Though high above all praise
Above all blessing high
Who would not fear His Holy Name
And laud and magnify

O for the living flame
From His own altar brought
To touch our lips our minds inspire
And wing to heaven our thought

God is our strength and song
And His salvation ours
Then be His love in Christ proclaimed
With all our ransomed powers

Stand up and bless the Lord
The Lord your God adore
Stand up and bless His glorious Name
Henceforth for evermore.

James Montgomery (1771 – 1854)

As we leave, let's bless each other by saying together:

May the Holy Spirit fill our whole beings
so that we walk the way of love, joy and peace,
glorifying God in our lives.

May the blessing of God
Father, Son and Spirit
be ours, today and every day.
Amen