

Issue 16

5th July 2020

For these days ...

Lectionary Readings

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Psalms 45:10-17

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Hymns

'Lord for the years'

'The one who longs to make us whole'

'Be thou my vision'

Dear friends, we are now into our 16th week since this newsletter began and I can hardly believe how quickly time is passing. The school holidays are here and I hope, that despite all the restrictions and upset plans, you are able to enjoy some rest, relaxation and hugs from younger family members. We are now in Phase 2 of the Government's route map out of Lockdown, with further announcements expected from the First Minister this week. All going well, there will be further easing of restrictions as the month unfolds and we hope and pray that things continue in this way. As always, please keep safe and do not hesitate to be in contact if there is anything you need – even if it's just to hear another voice at the end of the phone. For those online there are different ways to stay connected – through Sunday worship and Sunday Zoom catch ups and there's always something worth reading or watching on our Facebook pages, including storytime with Gillian and Lorraine's Thursday reflections. A time of prayer takes place on a Thursday evening and the link for that is below. As July unfolds and folks head off for some well deserved rest, there will be a suspension of many things, including the quiz nights, prayer time and Monday catch ups, until further notice. In addition to Facebook and our dial-a-service, there is also the opportunity to watch the service on Youtube (link below) and DVDs are available for those who do not have internet access – please spread the word. If you would like any information about anything I have mentioned, give me a call or drop me a line – I'd be delighted to help. With love and blessings, Ruth

Prayer

God,
Who says, come to me,
And you shall find rest,
Today we do just that,
We come to you,
Seeking,
We come to you,

Hoping,
 We come to you,
 Longing for some stillness and light,
 And a moment to catch our breath.

To lay down those things that weigh heavy on our hearts and minds,
 To reflect on the burdens we carry day in and day out,
 And to discover that load you speak about,
 that is easy and light.

God,
 Through your Word,
 Speak to us,
 Reveal to us again your love, grace and acceptance in Jesus,
 Challenge our expectations of you and others and self,
 And refresh us in our service,
 That we might know and live the joy that comes from following you,
 As you fit us with a load that is made to measure.
 May it increasingly be so,
 Amen.

Reading Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

¹⁶ “Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the marketplace. One group shouts to the other, ¹⁷ ‘We played wedding music for you, but you wouldn’t dance! We sang funeral songs, but you wouldn’t cry!’ ¹⁸ When John came, he fasted and drank no wine, and everyone said, ‘He has a demon in him!’ ¹⁹ When the Son of Man came, he ate and drank, and everyone said, ‘Look at this man! He is a glutton and wine drinker, a friend of tax collectors and other outcasts!’ God’s wisdom, however, is shown to be true by its results.”

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. ²⁶ Yes, Father, this was how you were pleased to have it happen.

²⁷ “My Father has given me all things. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. ³⁰ For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light.”

Reflection

Well,
 The schools are out for summer,
 And it's the time of year when many of us,
 Would be turning our thoughts towards holidays,
 Packing our suitcases and maybe even jetting off to the sun.

Few of us will be doing that this summer,
 But hopefully some of us will manage away to caravans and the likes,
 And even if we stay at home,
 Will enjoy a slower pace,
 And make some time for rest.

When I was thinking about that this week,
 This book here,
 Popped into my head!

The *Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*,
 That I haven't read in about 16 years!

But I've still got it,
 It was a set text when I was doing my History degree,
 And a module about the Cold War,
 And I want to tell you a story about this book,
 Because you see it's well travelled.

It was 2003,
 I was 21,
 My brother was 18,
 And my parents had just celebrated their silver wedding,
 And decided to take us on a trip of a lifetime to Australia
 in the September of that year.

I was just about to start my final honours year that month,
 And being the diligent swot that I was,
 Thought that I better take some reading with me
 to make sure I didn't fall behind.

So this book,
 Along with several others –
 A hold all full,
 Came with me –
 All the way to Singapore,
 And then Cairns,
 Canberra,
 Sydney,
 And then Singapore,
 Before making it safely home.

It was hand luggage,
 And these books made it very heavy,
 And I was grateful that quite often my Dad or brother
 would offer to give me hand.

And I tell you this today,

Because in the whole time that I was away,
I think I read parts of this book once.

I do remember sitting at a table studying,
Whilst everyone else went off to play crazy golf,
And looking back,
If I could speak to my younger self,
I'd say stop –
Get a life,
You don't need to take and carry them all the way
to Australia and back.

I've lightened up a lot since those days,
Kindles are a big help!,
But seriously,
How often do you and me carry things
that make us tired and weigh us down completely unnecessarily,
And yet think that this is what we should be about?

My hunch is,
Quite a lot of us,
And so our bible reading has important words for us today.

In some ways
It might seem like a disjointed reading,
Not least because the lectionary leaves verse 20-24,
But when we look a little closer,
We might see that there is a connection.

In the opening of our reading,
Jesus is talking about the present generation,
And he's basically saying that there is no pleasing some folks –
And isn't that the truth!

John came,
He didn't eat or drink like them,
He lived a very austere life,
And they thought him a bit strange,
And then Jesus came,
And he liked to eat and drink
and hang out with folks that others balked at,
And they didn't like him either,
they reckoned that he was as bit of lush,
Friend of riffraff.

John and Jesus were not what they had expected,
And so they could not see what was right in front of them.

Others couldn't see,
Because they were so bogged down,
Carrying a huge burden,
Placed on them by religious leaders and themselves,
Which made them exhausted
as they tried to keep every letter of the law -

Follow every single commandment.

They thought this was what pleased God,
But it would seem not.

For Jesus says to them,
'Come to me,
All of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads –
The message translations says,
Burned out on religion -
And I will give you rest.'

What an invitation –
To put down those heavy loads,
And to rest,
And in resting think about the stuff that we carry –
In our hearts and minds -
contemplate why we have been carrying it,
And then consider whether or not it is right to pick it back up again,
Or simply leave it and let it go,
Letting God replace it with the promise of a yoke that is easy,
And a load that is light.

That doesn't mean that it won't be challenging or demanding,
But it does mean that it should fit us,
Our character,
Our gifts,
Our spirit,
The tasks should be made to measure and bring us life.

There was a quote I read this week,
That really stayed with me,
It said:
'Maybe you're not tired because your doing too much,
But because you're not doing enough of what lights you up.'

For sure,
There are lots of tired people around at the moment,
Tired because of long hours and hard work,
But I wonder if there's a whole bunch of folks tired
because they aren't doing enough of what brings life.

And you know,
That is what Jesus is all about offering,
Inviting us into,
Life in all its fullness.

This week,
May you hear Jesus whisper come to me,
And in him may you rest a while –
May you put down the heavy loads you are carrying,
And consider what they are and why you are doing it.

Whose expectations are you trying to meet?

Other peoples?
Remember, there's no pleasing some folks!

Your own?
Are they reasonable?

Or God's?
God who does not need us to prove ourselves,
God who does not need any more Saviours,
God has already taken care of that,
And set us free,
So that we might do justice,
And love mercy,
And walk humbly and lightly with our God.

Prayer

Eternal God,
Sometimes life is overwhelming,
There are many weighed down and on their knees,
And so we are grateful for Jesus' words this morning,
That remind us of your love and care and compassion,
And your invitation to rest.

As we sink into your everlasting arms,
And breath deeply,
So we lay down our burdens,
And pray for those people and situations that weigh heavy on our hearts.

Those who are sick,
And those who care and worry for them.

Those who are weary and tired,
and look like they have the weight of the world upon them.

Those who feel like misfits in their job or calling,
Too preoccupied by others expectations of them and of themselves,
Longing for an easier yoke and lighter load.

Those who are dying,
And the loved ones who watch helplessly on,
wanting so much for things to be different.

Those who are mourning,
Suffocating under the weight of absence and grief.

Lord, in the silence, hear our prayers ...

Silence

God of love and compassion,
 may the anxious find peace,
 the despairing find hope,
 the misfit find home,
 the grieving find comfort,
 and the tired find rest,
 and may we,
 your church,
 seek that load that is light and yoke easy,
 as we walk in your world,
 and help others bear the load that they too carry.
 We ask it all in the name of Jesus,
 Who taught us to pray together saying:
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name ...

Closing Thought ...

We've now been in lockdown for enough weeks to be able to know that the expenditure for both congregations greatly outweighs the income. This was to be expected, not least as a consequence of there being no collection of free will offerings. Can I once again encourage you to fill and keep your envelopes or write a cheque and pass it on. For those who would like to know more about standing orders and gift aid, please contact our Treasurers at Waterfront and Dalmuir Barclay.

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0141 941 3317 or 07557657079

Dial-a-service 0141 278 6595

Dalmuir Barclay Youtube channel

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UC_BhuF4R1qhDDEbopduSgHA

Clydebank Waterfront Youtube channel

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCf0B0U_dcvlCN7UrSHS7ghQ

Topic: **A time to pause for prayer ...**

Time: July 9, 2020 08:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86893255704?pwd=RXFKdGdQT0RwRk9FckhrRUdKeEp3dz09>

Meeting ID: 868 9325 5704

Password: 572265