

Ardoch and Blackford Parish Churches

Sunday 30th August 2020



Welcome to our worship today when we will be talking about the Cross of Christ.

Our first hymn is Will you come and follow me

1. Will you come and follow me
If I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
And never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
Will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown
In you and you in me?
2. Will you leave yourself behind
If I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind

And never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
Should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer
In you and you in me?

3. Will you let the blinded see
If I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free
And never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
And do such as this unseen,
And admit to what I mean
In you and you in me?

4. Will you love the you inside
If I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
And never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
To reshape the world around,
Through my sight and touch and sound
In you and you in me?

5. Lord, your summons echoes true
When you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
And never be the same.
In your company I'll go
Where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
In you and you in me.

Mairi leads us in prayer Let us pray

Redeemer Christ,

We know that we can never thank you
enough for what you have done,
never praise you sufficiently for the
immensity of your grace and the depth of your
love.

But save us from using that as an excuse,
for failing to honour you as we should.

Help us to show our gratitude through the people
we are, through hearts open to you, minds
seeking, words proclaiming you and actions serving
you.

Small though it be, help us to do what we can to
honour your Name and to further your kingdom,
truly and lovingly to respond in Jesus Christ's
name.

Amen

Let us say together the 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, the power, and the glory,
for ever. Amen

Laura Peacock reads from Matthew Chapter 16 v 21-28

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. ²²Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, LORD!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" ²³Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." ²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. ²⁶What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ²⁷For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. ²⁸"Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

The hymn Laura has chosen is "I the Lord of Sea & Sky"

She explains the reason for her choice

"It's always makes me cry

It's a hymn that touches me very deeply
I've never audibly heard the voice of God
but I would love to meet him in person
and I would love to hear his voice in person and
I hope that if God calls me I'm ready
and I can stand as Samuel did and say
Here I am lord.

So that's my choice for this morning"

*I the Lord of sea and sky
I have heard my people cry
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.*

*I who made the stars and night
I will make the darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them
Whom shall I send?*

*Here I am Lord
Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go Lord
If you lead me
I will hold your people in my heart.*

*I the Lord of snow and rain
I have borne my people's pain
I have wept for love of them
They turn away.*

I will break their hearts of stone

*Fill their hearts with love alone
I will speak my word to them
Whom shall I send?*

*Here I am Lord
Is it I Lord ?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go Lord
If you lead me
I will hold your people in my heart.
I will hold your people in my heart...*

Mairi's reflection is on the Cross of Christ

If you remember back to last week Peter professed Jesus to be the "Messiah, the Son of the living God." Now Peter wants Jesus to conform to Peter's understanding of what that means. Don't we sometimes do that? We believe, know, confess, pray, and then we expect Jesus to participate in, support, give success and to make us happy. That's neither who nor how the Messiah, the Son of the living God, is.

Peter correctly named who Jesus is but he misunderstood with what that name entails. To deny the way of the cross is to ask Jesus to leave us and the world unchanged. It means we are willing to settle for moments of happiness. Christ offers us so much more than that.

We can never really understand what it means to believe in, confess, or follow Jesus as "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," until we deny ourselves,

take up our cross, and follow him.

We really do need to understand a few things here, God does not give us crosses to bear.

The burdens, difficulties, losses, and frustrations we encounter every day are not our cross.

They are simply the circumstances of life. Taking up our cross is not the means by which we are made good, acceptable, or lovable in God's eyes.

They're not God's punishment for our sins or his test of our faithfulness. The cross does not justify our sufferings in this world,

So what does the cross do?.....the cross transforms them.

To deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ means that we are willing to let go..... not be choosy about what we let go , but to let go of every thing that is holding us back....unconditionally

It means we are willing to exchange our ideas of happiness for abundant life.

That's what Jesus is teaching Peter and its what Jesus is teaching us.

So what about you? What will you do with the cross today?

Tomorrow?

Next week?

Do we want to really live or do we just want to try and muddle through to be happy?

I simply leave the choice with you. Amen

Our final hymn this morning is Take my life and let it be

Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet it's treasure store.

Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.

Benediction

Now go, knowing that Christ died on the Cross for each and everyone of us. In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Notices

Ardoch

Please watch Mairi's five minute chat on the Ardoch Web Site. She gives us hope that our Sanctuary will open again when the time is right. Blackford Church has a different layout from ourselves and we wish them well in their plans for reopening next Sunday.

The sub committee arranging the opening of our Church has, after studying the Church of Scotland and Government guidelines, recommended that we do not open at this time. The aisle is narrow and as we only have one entrance in and out of the Church we cannot meet the criteria of having a one way system. However, the Kirk Session is actively planning guidelines for opening when one metre spacing comes into effect.

Blackford

Blackford elders are reminded that we have a Kirk Session meeting on Monday 31st August at 7.30pm. This meeting will be held once again on Zoom as current guidelines still don't allow us to meet together as a group. Zoom joining details will be sent to all elders.

Blackford church reopens its doors for public worship next Sunday 6th September at 10.00am. We look forward to being back in our church again but will be thinking of those who are still unable to join us yet due to the current lockdown guidelines. Please remember to bring your face covering and also observe the social distancing requirements in place.

Ardoch Parish Church Scottish Charity Number SC000139

Blackford Parish Church Scottish Charity Number SC005594

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