

# Ardoch Parish Church



## Ardoch Guild Rededication Service

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021

Today, Heather McDonald, the Guild President welcomes everyone to the Guild service of Rededication. She encourages the whole community to support the work of the Guild in Ardoch and welcomes any new fellow-travellers, male or female, to join them on the journey, at any meetings or outings. The first meeting of the Session is this Thursday 7th Oct at 2.00pm, in the Church Hall, when our own Rev Mairi will reflect on Lights and Bushels, this being the national theme for 2021-2022.

It is going to be busy week as on Friday afternoon there is the intergenerational Singalong, the Hot Chocolate Club meets in the evening, the Youth group enjoy activities in the woods on Saturday and next Sunday 10th October is Harvest Thanksgiving at which our retiring collection will be for Edith's Hope.

### **Let us draw near to God:**

The light of God be in our hearts. The light of inspiration in our minds. The light of truth in our eyes, bright and unhidden.

### **Our opening Hymn: Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord.**

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;  
Tender to me the promise of his word;  
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.  
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!

Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
His holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.  
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!  
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.  
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
To children's children and for evermore.

Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith Music: Walter Greatorex

### **Prayer of approach**

Lord we come into your presence at this special time, in this special place away from hubbub, pressures and concerns of everyday lives. Help us to be still to know your peace. Almighty God we give thanks for our amazing world, for the beauty that surrounds us. Help us to lead positive lives, ever grateful of the abundance of goodness around, both in nature and the love and generosity of those we meet. Forgive us Lord when we wander from the path of goodness when we think only of ourselves. We know what displeases you Lord and yet we are aware of the many times we have let you down. We ask your guidance away from life's temptations, from our selfishness and thoughtlessness.

This we ask in the name of Jesus

Amen

### **The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 5 v 13-16 is read by Maureen James - Salt and Light**

Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be the salt - seasoning that brings out the God flavours of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness?

You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the rubbish. Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a

hilltop, on a light stand - SHINE! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven. Amen  
From The Message Bible

### **Heather comments on the reading from Matthew**

We are all familiar with this short passage which Maureen has read, and I am going to be reiterating many of the points Mairi made last week, but no harm there. We have all sat in a congregation and heard sermons on it. The “you” in the passage had a nice comfortable plural nuance about it. It was what “we” should be doing. All very well and good and I'm certain we took this to heart. As a Guild we have shone in some very dark places with our donations to projects throughout the world. Then came COVID 19 and “lock-down”. All of us found that we were very much on our own . What kept coming to mind was a favourite Sunday School hymn – and we have it projected now on the screen:

Jesus bids us shine with a pure clear light,  
Like a little candle burning in the night.  
In this world of darkness; so, let us shine,  
You in your small corner and I in mine.

So the “you” has now become singular and very personal. The things that each of us do on our own matter to God as much as our group efforts. Every one of us has the power to make this world just a wee bit better, to shine in the dark corners that only we can see.

Our reading reminds us that God is not a secret to be kept. If God is in our lives, it is definitely okay to tell others in words, as well as by our actions. But then we are the Guild and hopefully that's what we would do anyway.

### **Let us pray**

Lord, we thank you for the lights that have shone in our lives, for those who have helped us when we were ill, when we were struggling with difficult issues and when we just needed a bit of friendly help. Help us to be lights willing to shine for others in their dark times and ready to give help and friendship where it is needed .  
Amen

### **Our next Hymn is As a fire is meant for burning.**

Preaching Christ and not our customs,  
Let us build a bridge of care,

Joining hands across the nations,  
Finding neighbours everywhere.  
We are learners; we are teachers;  
We are pilgrims on the way.  
We are seekers; we are givers;  
We are vessels made of clay.

By our gentle, loving actions,  
We will show that Christ is light.  
In a humble, listening Spirit,  
We will live to God's delight.

As a green bud in the springtime  
Is a sign of life renewed,  
So may we be signs of oneness  
'mid earth's peoples, many-hued.

As a rainbow lights the heavens  
When a storm is past and gone,  
So may we reflect the radiance  
Of God's new and glorious dawn.

Words: Ruth C Duck

### **Prayer of Intercession by Pat Duncan**

And now, O Lord, we lay before you our concerns for others our concerns for the world. We pray for your Church here in Scotland, and throughout the world, and we ask that you sustain and bless all who by their words and actions seek to spread the Good News to all people.

We pray for harmony amongst all who follow the way of Jesus Christ, for barriers between denominations to be swept away, and for all to be united in their aim to serve you, and do your will.

We ask your blessing on organisations within our Church:

And at this time we remember especially the Guild and affiliated groups, the projects they support at home and abroad.

Guide and inspire all who plan for the future and encourage those who deal with the day to day tasks which make it all possible.

We pray for the leaders of nations, communities, industry and the caring services and we ask that each will use their influence wisely and with compassion so that all they do is acceptable to you.

We pray for peace, for the healing of quarrels and disputes,

within families and between nations. We offer our prayers for peace throughout the world, for an epidemic of brotherly and sisterly love to sweep through nations.

We pray for all who are ill, for those who know physical pain, and for those who suffer mental torment, and we remember those who, because of advancing years, are frustrated because their activities are curtailed.

We pray for the bereaved, those trying to rebuild their lives after the loss of one for whom they cared dearly, but who face constant reminders that there is a gap which cannot be filled.

Heavenly Father, there are many who have secret sorrows and anxieties which they feel they cannot share with others.

May all who are weary and burdened with a load of care find comfort in the knowledge that you know their worries and that you are always with them.

These prayers we make in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen

## **Rededication of Ardoch Guild by Rev Mairi Perkins**

### **Reflection by Heather McDonald on Lights and Bushels**

The Bible is full of stories where people “look forward in faith” in many different ways and for many different reasons. One of these is Noah and the Ark. Noah showed enormous faith by trusting God’s call to him to save his family and the animals and take the world to a new place beyond the world of sinfulness that had been emerging.

Another is the story of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

Moses was convinced he wasn’t the right person to lead his people, yet he put his faith in God and went on a journey from Egypt to somewhere he did not know, overcoming huge trials along the way and ultimately not even reaching the promised land himself.

And then there is Mary answering her call.

A young woman looking forward to an ordinary life with her husband and family is called to be the mother of Jesus and to be at the very heart of everything that he encountered, even to the point of seeing him executed.

And of course, Jesus himself, in so many places, perhaps most importantly going into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Jesus’ whole life was lived in a spirit of looking forward in faith, showing wisdom and courage that he could not have had without that faith in his purpose

and his God.

The challenge is to see how we can look forward in faith, knowing that no matter the challenges and tragedies, the hopes and the successes that mark our lives, we can face them all knowing that we have God on our side and that faith will carry us when we can't carry ourselves.

Perhaps the most relevant example of "looking forward in faith" for us, is shown by the ordinary people who followed Jesus ...the disciples and the women such as Mary Magdalene. These were not great leaders or thinkers or teachers ... yet they formed the very core of the church from the earliest times by recognising their own gifts and their own vocation to work with and for their master.

What talents do we have? What characteristics can we offer in service?

We need to take our lights from under the bushel and let them shine as brightly as they can. It may be unnerving but we can do this by "Looking forward in Faith."

The two headings, "Look forward in faith" and "Lights and Bushels" work well together. The first is about looking outside ourselves. It is about putting trust in God and realising that whatever we do or are faced with we don't do it alone.

As we emerge from the pandemic we are faced with issues of confidence and insecurity as we learn how to live a "normal" life that will differ from what we knew before. The challenge of matching the novel with the familiar is unsettling and facing that challenge demands a faithful approach.

The second is about looking into ourselves. It is not enough to look forward in blind faith...we need to reflect on how we can affect what happens next. That is always true, but perhaps more so in these times. What do we bring to this new situation - experiences, insights, practical skills, personal qualities all play their part in different ways for different people.

The way ahead surely depends on the interaction between living by faith and living in service, the combination of these is immensely powerful.

These words from the old children's hymn ring true

**Hide it under a bushel – NO**

**I'm going to let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Amen**

## Offering Prayer by Anne Walker

Everlasting Father, thank you that you are the light of the world, guiding our steps on your path. We thank you for the many talents you have given us. Help us to use them wisely in the work of your kingdom. In grateful thanks, we dedicate our offerings to you. We ask you to use them for the work of your kingdom here and around the world. And as we bring our gifts of money we say thank you that you have given us so much more: our homes, our families, our friends, our church families, the world with all its wonders, and the greatest gift of all, your Son and our Saviour, in whose words we pray, saying. Our Father, which art in heaven

Hallowed by 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.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever

Amen

## Our closing hymn 543: Longing for light we wait in the darkness.

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,

Light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts,

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your Church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has power to save us.

Make us your living voice.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts,

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your Church gathered today.

Longing for food, many are hungry.

Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
Shared until all are fed.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in our hearts,  
Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in your Church gathered today.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
Walls made of living stone.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in our hearts,  
Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!

Shine in your Church gathered today.  
Many the gifts, many the people,  
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another,  
Making our kingdom come.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in our hearts,  
Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in your Church gathered today.  
Words and Music: Bernadette Farrell

### **The Sending**

The God who called us here is now sending us out, to turn words into action, worship into service, vision into reality.

### **Three fold Amen**