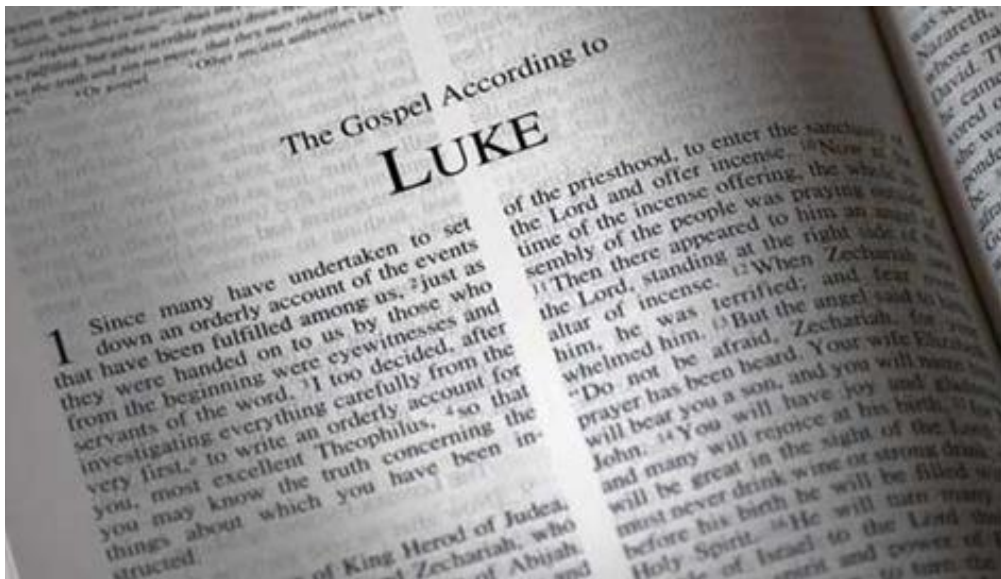


Ardoch and Blackford Parish Churches

Sunday 9th January 2022



During 2022 we'll spend a lot of time in Luke's Gospel. So this week, with Mairi on holiday, Gordon Roy takes us to the first four verses of Luke's Gospel to get a sense of who he was, how he was writing and particularly why he was writing.

That will help us learn how to read what he wrote.

In the services we're using a round of questions like *Who wants to be a millionaire?* to explore the topic and then picking up on each answer. In this written format we've put all the questions together at the start and then we'll reveal the answers as you read on.

So our first two questions are:

- 1. Where do we find Luke's Gospel in the New Testament?**
 - A) First book
 - B) Second book
 - C) Third book
 - D) Fourth Book
- 2. Who wrote Luke's Gospel?**
 - A) Luke
 - B) Mark
 - C) God
 - D) All of the above

3. **How much of the New Testament did Luke write?**
 - A) About a half
 - B) About a third
 - C) About a quarter
 - D) About a tenth
4. **Who did Luke spend time with before writing his book?**
 - A) Peter
 - B) Paul
 - C) Jesus
 - D) None of the above
5. **What was Luke's job?**
 - A) Doctor
 - B) Tax Collector
 - C) Fisherman
 - D) We don't know
6. **What's unique about Luke among the Gospel writers?**
 - A) The only one who was not one of the 12.
 - B) The only one who had a profession.
 - C) The only non-Jew
 - D) The only one to write more than one New Testament book.
7. **Which Gospels take us to the stable in Bethlehem?**
 - A) Luke
 - B) Luke and Matthew
 - C) Luke and Mark
 - D) None of the above
8. **In Jesus' family tree, Luke takes us back to whom?**
 - A) David
 - B) Joseph
 - C) Abraham
 - D) Adam
9. **What Parable would we not have without Luke?**
 - A) The Sower
 - B) The Prodigal Son
 - C) Houses on rock & sand
 - D) The mustard seed
10. **What does Theophilus mean?**
 - A) God's messenger
 - B) The study of God
 - C) Lover of God
 - D) The awakening
11. **Why did Luke write his book?**
 - A) Because Theophilus paid him
 - B) Something to do on boat trips
 - C) So that readers would be certain of things
 - D) He owed it to Mary to tell the story
12. **What did servants of the word do?**
 - A) put it on display
 - B) keep it safe
 - C) share it
 - D) update it
13. **What did Luke say he was writing about?**
 - A) what been promised
 - B) what he's heard about
 - C) what he's been told to write
 - D) what has been fulfilled
14. **What does Luke mean by "an orderly account?"**
 - A) a diary
 - B) a biography
 - C) a themed narrative
 - D) a well calculated bill
15. **What does Luke mean by, "so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught."?**
 - A) so that you win the next quiz
 - B) so that a growing knowledge and confidence shapes your life
 - C) a body of knowledge to store away for when it's needed
 - D) so that you can go back and thank those who have taught you



Crave my indulgence for one more week because we start with a Christmas carol. And after we get past the first line, the hymn can be sung at any time of year. If you're joining us at home try to remember Handel's fantastic tune to sing it rather than just read it. Either way, let's worship God.

Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing (repeat)
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing

Joy to the earth the Saviour reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy (repeat)
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love (repeat)
And wonders, wonders of His love

Words: Isaac Watts; Music: George Frideric Handel © Public Domain

Let's continue to worship God in prayer

Lord God, we join with heaven and with nature to sing our worship to you; to sing our welcome to you as King; to sing of the wonders of your love, your creation, your majesty and your rule.

Lord God we create room now; room in our diaries, our schedules, our minds and our hearts to focus on you, to give you praise; to receive from you in challenge, encouragement, confidence, knowledge.

Thank you for your word—your written word which we open through Luke this morning and the Living Word your son, Jesus, who he reveals to us as we read. So we gather our thoughts and our prayers in the words he taught us :

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be thy name.

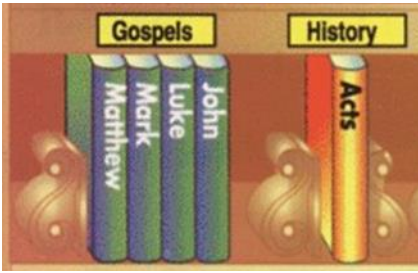
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

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



Luke's Gospel is the third book in the New Testament.. It is widely accepted that Mark wrote his Gospel first and that this was one of the "other accounts" Luke had access to in writing his book. But although he copied some of what Mark wrote and added his own details from "careful investigation," we recall 2

Timothy 3:16 which says that all scripture is God-breathed and useful..." so all three gave us Luke's Gospel. Let's read.

Our Bible reading is from Luke 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.

³ With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

The readers at each service were asked to choose and introduce a hymn: In Blackford, William Hensley has chosen: 'I will offer up my life in spirit and truth' by Matt Redman,

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth
Pouring out the oil of love as my worship to You
In surrender I must give my every part
Lord receive the sacrifice of a broken heart

*Jesus what can I give what can I bring
To so faithful a friend to so loving a King
Saviour what can be said what can be sung
As a praise of Your name
For the things You have done
Oh my words could not tell not even in part
Of the debt of love that is owed
By this thankful heart*

You deserve my every breath for You've paid the great cost
Giving up Your life to death even death on a cross
You took all my shame away there defeated my sin
Opened up the gates of heaven and have beckoned me in.

Words & Music: Matt Redman © 1994 Thankyou Music

At Ardoch Dorothy Johnston chose *How great thou art*:

O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made
I see the stars I hear the mighty thunder
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed

*Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee
How great Thou art how great Thou art
Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee
How great Thou art how great Thou art*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze

And when I think that God His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die I scarce can take it in
That on the Cross my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home what joy shall fill my heart
Then shall I bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim my God how great Thou art

Words: Stuart Wesley Keene Hine, © 1949 and 1953 Stuart Hine Trust

His Gospel is only the first half of his contribution. Luke also writes Acts (so c1/4 of the NT), dedicates it to Theophilus and describes his first book as being about “what Jesus began to do.” Jesus wasn’t finished when he returned to heaven and he’s not finished yet.

He’s very well placed to write Acts as he’s there at the time (e.g. verses like Acts 16:11 “From Troas we put out to sea,”). He’s spending time with Paul gleaning all he can from him. Paul signs off his letter to the Colossians with “Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. “ 4;14).

Luke is the only non-Jewish writer in the New Testament so he’s always keen to show that the good news is offered to all people. To women, children, the poor, the sick and the gentiles; each one has the offer of salvation through repentance and the forgiveness of sins—a key theme for Luke alongside the joy of knowing that forgiveness.

In taking us back to the beginning he therefore takes us to the nativity story (and to the manger, 2: 7,12) but also to Adam in his genealogy of Jesus in chapter 3. No one is outside of Jesus' story—unless by their own choice.

The Prodigal Son lived outside of that relationship with his father by choice until coming to his senses. Luke only tells us that story

Now to return to our text in a bit more detail, Luke is writing to a man with a Greek name that means Lover of God; possibly he's a new believer in Jesus, possibly still searching for answers; possibly established in his faith but looking for more answers. Wherever we are in our faith, Luke can speak to us as well; these facts are eternal significance. But why did he write his book? We'll find out after this hymn!

Our third hymn may well be new to us but fits with Luke's writing plan—that we would know the truths of the gospel



These are the facts as we have received them
These are the truths that the Christian believes

This is the basis of all of our preaching
Christ died for sinners and rose from the tomb

These are the facts as we have received them
Christ has fulfilled what the scriptures foretold
Adam's whole family in death had been sleeping
Christ through His rising restores us to life

These are the facts as we have received them
We with our Saviour have died on the cross
Now having risen our Jesus lives in us
Gives us His Spirit and makes us His home

These are the facts as we have received them
We shall be changed in the blink of an eye
Trumpets shall sound as we face life immortal
This is the victory through Jesus our Lord

© **Words: 1973 Michael Saward - The Jubilate Group**
© **Music: 1973 Norman Warren - The Jubilate Group**

Luke wanted Theophilus and us to be sure of our faith, certain of its historical basis. Just as the first eyewitnesses spoke of what they had seen and heard as “servants of the word,” so this is the basis of all of our preaching as well. Servants of the word today are those who

minister—with or without a capital M—and we're required to serve the Word of God, not make it serve our purposes.

This good news of Jesus has been planned and fulfilled throughout the Bible timeline. Luke records Jesus telling his disciples before ascending into heaven that “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” (24:44). Nothing about our salvation is haphazard or accidental and Luke takes the same care over that. His orderly account” groups events to illustrate Jesus’ teaching and follows a simple timeline and journey from birth and childhood, to ministry Galilee then on to Jerusalem for his death, resurrection and ascension. This themed narrative helps to focus our minds on what Jesús began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven.”

Just as these verses are the foundation of Luke Gospel, these facts are the foundation of our faith if we choose to build on them each day shaping our lives around them.

Let's pray: Father God, thank you again for your word; for those like Luke. Mark and Paul who were inspired to write what you revealed to them as your Spirit breathed into them.

Thank you for those who have translated and paraphrased it; designed it and packaged it in accessible formats for us to choose from to read, to listen to, to watch, to study and to talk about.

Inspire us through your Spirit as we read this book this year—perhaps even this week, that we may grow in knowledge, grace and confidence as individuals and as a community of believers. Amen.

Our final hymn is a real hymn of personal testimony as we build confidence in our growing knowledge and understanding of God

I know not why God's wondrous grace, to me has been made known
Nor why—unworthy as I am—he claimed me for His own

*But 'I know whom I have believed
And am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I've committed
Unto Him against that day*

I know not how this saving faith To me He did impart
Or how believing in His word, brought peace within my heart

I know not how the Spirit moves Convincing us of sin
Revealing Jesus through the Word creating faith in Him

I know not what of good or ill may be reserved for me
Of weary ways or golden days before His face I see

Words: Daniel Webster Whittle © Public Domain

**Now go into this week to know with certainty
the blessing of God the Father, the salvation of Jesus Christ his
Son and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Intimations

This coming Tuesday, 11th January **Time for Reflection** in the Scottish Parliament will be led by Rev Mairi. This can be viewed on scottishparliament.tv website at 2.00pm and it is also recorded for later viewing.

Forest Mission is on Saturday 15th January beginning 2.00pm in the Lodge Park. All children are welcome. Wrap up warmly.

Hot Chocolate Club at 6.30pm on Friday 14th January outdoors.

Remember the Service change of time

11.30am at Ardoch

10.00am at Blackford

Some worship opportunities if you are not able to join us:

7:30am BBC Radio Scotland New every Sunday: Act of worship with Rev Janice Andrews, of Musselburgh Congregational Church.

8:10am BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship As the new year unfolds the Rev Canon Ann Easter reflects on the theme of Wonder. Preacher: Dr Amy Orr-Ewing. Hymns and readings for the season of Epiphany.

1:15pm BBC 1 Songs of Praise: Sean Fletcher is in Liverpool to discover why baptism is so important to Christians and how Jesus's baptism is celebrated by different denominations at this time of year.

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8326, 709991, 2287040, 1028468

Blackford Parish Church, CCLI Licence Number: 880762
Ardoch Parish Church Scottish Charity Number SC000139
Blackford Parish Church Scottish Charity Number SC005594
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