

Encouraging YOU to know JESUS

There is power in the name of Jesus

Please note that our Interim Moderator and Locum, Rev. Rona Young, will be on holiday from Monday 17th until Monday 24th August (inclusive). We wish Rona and Tom a happy, peaceful and relaxing break. If in need of urgent pastoral care during Rona's absence, please contact Gary McCleary by telephone on 07931 952497.

The Minister's Message

Welcome and Intimations

Good Morning, and on a bright sunny morning, a very warm welcome to everyone watching this online service from Newton Wallacetown Church. At last we have had a week of real summer weather and I hope you have all enjoyed some time out in the sun.

As always, the Extraordinary Times will be available from 12 noon and we begin our prayer time together at 12.30pm, beginning with the Lord's Prayer and continuing with your own personal prayers. The Foodbank will be open as usual this afternoon from 2pm to 3pm. and as Pauline said last Sunday, so many people have been so generous week by week.

I have had a phone call from Fred Vincent of the Church of Scotland: Priority Areas team asking about NWC and saying, if you are interested, to please look up their Facebook page: Priority Areas.

Church family news

Mrs Anne McDonald is in Ayr Hospital and Mrs Elsie Burgess is still seriously ill also in Ayr Hospital. The happy news is that, the week before last, Jane and Nick Sibley have become grandparents for the first time, and so congratulations to them on the birth of their new granddaughter.

Finally, I will be on holiday next week, resuming work on Tuesday 25th August. Any funerals will be conducted by Gary McCleary. I have always taken two weeks off in the summer and so I will have another week's holiday in September.

Call to worship

*"This is the day the Lord has made,
let us rejoice and be glad in it."*

Hymn "All over the world the Spirit is moving"

Prayer

Let us pray,

Lord Jesus Christ, we praise you for the great wonder at the heart of the Gospel – you shared our humanity and our weakness. You are sovereign over all, and yet you became a servant. You are the giver of life, and yet you endured the reality of death. You are Lord of Lords, and yet you were crowned with thorns. In what the world counts as weakness, you displayed true strength.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are greatly to be praised. We praise you for your love that is able to turn human expectations upside-down, and we rejoice in everything this means for us today – when we are weak, you are strong, when we feel most helpless, you are most powerful, when we can do so little, you can do so much. Lord Jesus Christ, you are greatly to be praised.

Loving God, we know there are so many ways in which we have failed you over the past week. Forgive us, like the people of all ages, we are all too human – our spirits are willing, but the flesh is weak, our intentions are good, but living up to them is poor. Forgive us that, although you have tried to lead us back to you, disciplining us in love, gently correcting our mistakes, we have rejected your guidance.

In the silence,
we confess our own personal sins to our Heavenly Father....

Loving God, we thank you that you help us to recognise our faults and with your help, we can change them, so that we may be the people you call us to be.

This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen

It was great to see all the boys and girls last Sunday, and I trust you have all enjoyed your days back at school.

The Kids' Talk this morning is by Gary McCleary.

Hymn "Come on and celebrate!"

The passages this morning will be read by Julie and Rosie Eggo.

Bible reading (1) Matthew 5: 1 – 12

*Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount*¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

- ³ 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
- ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
- ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
- ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.
- ¹¹ Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.
- ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Bible reading (2) Philippians 2: 5 – 11

Imitating Christ's humility

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
6 who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage:
7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!
9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Hymn “My Jesus, my Saviour” (sung by Rosie Eggo and Sara Green)

Sermon

“The 3rd Beatitude”

Let us pray,

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of all our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. Amen

Last Sunday, Pauline spoke about JOY as Jesus first, others second and yourself last. In the Beatitudes, Jesus shifts our attention away from ourselves, back to God and then to others.

In Colossians 1:16 Paul says, “*For in him (Christ) all things were created...all things were created by him and for him.*” Jesus knows our personalities because he designed, he created them. An 82-year-old man declared that, after he had invited Christ into his soul, “I knew that I had done the right thing in surrendering to Christ, because the moment I received him, I was no longer fighting with myself.” In other words, he is saying, when the soul finds Christ, it finds itself.

We might ask now, what exactly is our soul? One definition is: the soul is the part of us with which we think, feel and decide or to put it another way - our thoughts, feelings and will. Our soul therefore come into its own, when Christ dwells in it.

Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes.

These verses could be described as attitudes, instead of Beatitudes, and our attitudes have a powerful influence on our spiritual, mental and emotional well-being.

Each statement begins with the word “*Blessed*” and so if we want our lives to be blessed then, if we have these attitudes, we will be happier and content.

The Greek word for soul is “*psyche*” from which we get the words, psyche and psychology – the part of us in which we think, feel and make decisions.

I recently read, and I quote, from the late Selwyn Hughes,

“psychologists are called psychologist because they work in the realm of our soul, attempting to bring about and facilitate in people, a better co-ordination in the way they think, feel and decide.”

I had never thought of psychologists having anything to do with our souls – we learn something new every day! And, I am sure secular psychologists will not agree with the mention of the word soul.

Before we think in detail about the third Beatitude, let us hear verse 15 from chapter 3 in the book of the prophet, Malachi. *"But now we call the arrogant blessed."* He says that the Jews at that time are calling the arrogant blessed. They thought that the people who put themselves first, were the happy or blessed ones!

This is how confused they have become and this is how the O.T. finishes, and for 400 years no prophet was heard, until the Son of God came into the world.

In one of his first sermons – The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spells out in crystal clear terms, what it means to be blessed by God.

This morning, let us think in detail about the third Beatitude: **"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."**

I am sure you can imagine someone saying, *"That is not true."* It is not the meek people that get on well in life, it is the powerful assertive people who will inherit the earth. Someone who attended a seminar on assertiveness once said, *"This saying of Jesus is totally wrong, because anyone who adopts that attitude will end up a doormat."*

The problem is the translation of the word, *"meek."* Our understanding today is far from the original meaning of the word. To Jesus, the word translated as *"meek"* did not mean *"weakness"* but *"strength"* – a kind of inner strength that makes a person strong and self-assured, but also dependent.

In the dictionary, the word, *"meek"* means *"Humble, gentle and submissive,"* but a truly meek person, in the Biblical sense, is not a timid, submissive person. The meek are strong and they have an inner trust in God.

Jesus himself knew that, whatever difficulties a day might bring, God's purposes would prevail. The meek are those who do not have to fight their way through life, they know that God is with them, each and every day.

In the list of the nine fruit of the Spirit, listed in Galatians chapter 5, the eighth word is translated in the NIV as *"gentleness."* In the A.V. it is translated as *"meekness"* and in the GNB it is *"humility."*

I was a probationer with Rev Jim Greig at Irvine Old Parish Church, who sadly died many years ago now. When he was retiring, I remember the then Moderator of Irvine and Kilmarnock Presbytery saying, that he was a *"gentle giant."* He was a tall man, who had a gentle manner, especially in pastoral matters, but in no way was he weak.

The correct meaning of the word *"meek"* could be used of him. He had great personal strength and power, but he always kept it under control, and that is true gentleness.

The word, *"meek,"* can be used to describe a horse, which has been broken in, so that it obeys the reins and is under control. The Greek historian, Xenophon, says that a horse is a powerful animal. A horse was a symbol of strength in the Greek world. Wild and untamed, it is a useless animal. It can be used for tasks for which it was created, but first it has to be tamed and taught. A tamed horse is a picture of strength under control.

Strength and gentleness. It is in a remarkable vision, given by John, on the isle of Patmos, which we read in the book of Revelation that we see these two combined. At verse 4 of chapter 5, we read that John says, *"I wept and wept because no one was found, who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside."*

This was the scroll on which the destiny of mankind was written. He is told to wipe his tears, because there is One in heaven who can open the scroll, the Lion from the tribe of Judah. But when John looks for a Lion, he sees a Lamb!

The Lion is the symbol of strength and majesty, whereas the Lamb is the symbol of sacrifice. As we read in Isaiah chapter 53, the Suffering Servant is led like a lamb to the slaughter – the sacrificial lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

In the Book of Revelation, Jesus is called the Lamb 29 times, although he is never referred to that way in the O.T. So, when John sees the Lion of Judah who can open the seven scrolls, he sees the Lamb – it is the Risen Christ, who reigns through sacrifice. The Lion has become the Lamb.

There are many things that can be done through gentleness, that cannot be done by force. That is the moral of the fable, of the quarrel between the wind and the sun. The wind said to the sun, *“I am stronger than you are, I’ll prove it. Let us see which of us can make the ploughman take off his coat.”* The wind blew hard, but all his blowing could not drag the coat away. *“Now,”* said the sun, *“let me try.”* He beamed and so the man exclaimed, *“How hot it is!”* then he unbuttoned his coat. Soon he threw it open, and at last off the coat came.

Force often means resistance. It is possible to achieve, by warmth and gentleness, that which cannot be done by aggression and force.

In Numbers chapter 12:3, we read, *“Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.”* In the A.V. we are told that Moses was *“meek”*. I am sure we know enough about Moses to know that in no way was he a meek or a weak man, but Moses was humble towards God.

He was not concerned with his own position, but only about God and the Israelites. He was dependent upon God, he trusted God and he was humbly obedient to God’s will. Meekness is humility towards God.

When we have genuine humility, then we have a truly balanced view of ourselves and others. We see the greatness and goodness in God, and in others around us, and we are able to see ourselves as we really are. There can be times when we can feel relatively insignificant compared to others, but we know that we are of great worth to God.

Our first Bible reading was from Philippians chapter 2. In many ways, this is the most moving passage that Paul wrote about Jesus. In the first part of this chapter, Paul is pleading with the Philippians to live together in harmony, to stop quarrelling, to put aside their personal ambitions and pride, and their desire for prominence and prestige.

Paul is calling them to be humble and to serve – and he calls them to follow the example of Jesus. These verses are entitled, *“Imitating Christ’s humility.”*

Verse 5 *“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.”* Paul is telling the Philippians, and he tells us too, that Jesus was humble and walked the way of obedience all the way to his death on the cross. He did not want to dominate others, but to serve them; he did not want his own way, but God’s way; he did not want to exalt himself, but chose the way of humility.

Jesus won the hearts of others, not by having power over them, but by showing them, a love that they could not resist. To know this man, who laid aside his glory, and loved them to the extent, that he gave his life for them, meant that they could do no other than worship him.

Paul says that as a consequence of his sacrificial love, God gave Jesus the name above all other names – Jesus.

So, from the third Beatitude we see that we are to put God first in our lives and we are to be humble as Christ is humble. So often we want to follow the world’s ways – but if we deny ourselves and take up our cross daily, it will make all the difference to our lives.

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” What does “they will inherit the earth” mean?

The best way I have found to explain it is in the Bible called “The Message” by Eugene Peterson. He translates this verse:

“You are blessed when you are content with who you are – no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.”

Amen.

Hymn “There is power in the name of Jesus”

Prayer Our prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Let us pray,

Sovereign God,

we thank you that you have made all of us different – in character, temperament, background and experience. We thank you for the way this helps us, and for the opportunities it brings, to share with one another. Help us to understand that all our differences may not be a source of weakness, but of strength.

We thank you that you reveal yourself to us in different ways – in the still small voice, yet also in the hustle and bustle of life. Through lively songs of praise, but also through moments of quiet reflection; through unforgettable moments of encounter and yet sometimes in the ordinary experiences of each day. Lord God, we thank you that you speak to us in so many diverse ways.

Living and Loving God,

we bring before you now the families of the men who lost their lives, in the train derailment near Stonehaven last Wednesday. We pray for those who were injured and everyone involved as they recover from such a sudden shock in their lives.

Eternal God,

as we watched the Commemorations for Victory over Japan Day yesterday, we give thanks for all those who served in horrific conditions in the Far East until the very end of the 2nd World War. As we marked 75 years to the day since the war ended, we remember all those for whom such a day brings sad memories of those who lost their lives and are remembered by their families.

Lord God,

we constantly are hearing of shops and firms having to close due to Covid-19 and we ask you to be especially close to everyone who has become unemployed and for those who worry about future unemployment.

Compassionate God,

we bring before you now the members of our congregation and others we know, who have been bereaved in recent days and weeks.

We pray for Anne McRonalld in Ayr Hospital and Mrs Elsie Burgess still serious ill in Ayr Hospital.

We pray too, for those who are depressed or anxious about themselves or a loved one.

In the silence, we bring those in our hearts before you now.....

Loving God, bless all those for whom we have prayed.
Help us all, we pray, to put our trust in you.
This we pray through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord,
Amen.

Hymn "O for a thousand tongues to sing"

Benediction

*"Grace, mercy and peace,
from God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be with you all this day and for evermore."*

Amen.

Rona



Please remember in your prayers this week all of the people below in hospital, care homes or in their own homes:-

Mrs Margaret Burgess	Mrs Anne McDonald
Mrs Irene Gibson	Mrs Maude Smillie
Mrs Rae Beattie	Mrs Jeanette Burns
Mr Alasdair Wham	Mr John Cassells
Mrs Betty McPherson	Mrs Ann Shaw
Mrs Anna Irving	Mrs May Wilkinson
Mrs Catherine MacDonald	Mrs Heather McLeod
Mrs Ellise Wilson	Mrs Alison Wilson (now in Berelands Care Home)
Mr Ken Birnie	Mrs Madge Birnie

Please let the Session Clerk know of any member/relative who goes in to hospital or is ill at home. For those in hospital, please ensure you have their given Christian name which may not necessarily be the name by which s/he is usually known.

Prayer Chain Anyone having a request for prayer may contact Sheena Hunter on 01292 570200 or e-mail her at sheenahunter@hotmail.com

Salvation Army Foodbank A big thank you to all who have donated on past Sunday afternoons. Please note that donations will be accepted in the church drive between **2.00** and **3.00pm**. Only leave your car when the person before you has gone and, if possible, please place your contribution directly into the boot of the receiving car.

Difficult times While these are times of worry and hardship for many people, the Church is also struggling financially. If you are able, we would be most grateful if you would consider making an extra donation (according to means) to help cover ongoing bills etc.. Please contact Janis Meredith whose details are on page 9. Anyone wishing to donate to Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church online can use this link:- <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/support-your-local-church-with-our-new-online-donations-system> Thank you. *John Bell*

Can you help? We are looking for someone to be NWC's contact with Nkhata Bay Church in Malawi. This is open to all members of the congregation. If you are interested, please speak to Rev. Rona Young or John Bell in the first instance.

Birthdays We wish each of the following a very Happy Birthday in the coming week:-

17th August Marion Harvey and Elaine Main

18th August Ian Gibson

21st August Caitlin McPherson



Remember Streaming of our morning service conducted this week by Rev. Rona Young and next week by Gary McCleary will commence at **11.00am** then our **prayer time** starts at **12.30pm** with the Lord's Prayer followed by personal prayers. This helps bring us together to reach out to him in prayer while we are distancing physically. Please join us for the service if you can and take part in the prayer time which many are finding valuable and some find comforting.

*Blessed are the meek, for they will
inherit the earth.*

Matthew 5:5

Humility is not
thinking less of
yourself, it's
thinking of
yourself less.

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