**DALMENY AND QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH**

**MIDWEEK SERVICES**

**FEBRUARY 2023**

This February we will look in the first 2 weeks at the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and the Boy Jesus in the Temple. In the third week we’ll look at Fair Trade. Fair Trade fortnight isn’t until March this year but we’ll be well into Lent by then. On the 4th Thursday we’ll look at Jesus tempted in the desert.

**Week 1 – Jesus Presented in the Temple**

**Leader:**

Locked in white, frozen to the marrow, despairing of spring, still we come to you, O God.

You are in the snow; you are in the cold; you secretly nourish growth and plan the surprise of snowdrop and daffodil.

Melt our frozen hearts, Lord; help us forgive.

Unlock our frozen minds, Lord; help us accept forgiveness.

*Kate McIlhagga*

**Opening Responses**

Like Simeon

**MAY I GROW OLD IN HOPE AND WONDER**

Like Anna

**MAY I BE IN LOVE WITH YOU ALL MY DAYS**

May I be open to truth, open to surprises.

**MAY I LET YOUR SPIRIT INTO MY LIFE.**

May I let your justice change my behaviour.

**MAY I LIVE IN THE BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR JOY.**

**Read:** **Psalm 24**

**Hymn or song or other music** – **332 and 333 in CH4are possibilities**

**Read:**  **Malachi 3 verses 1 - 5**

**Prayer**

Lord God, we come to give you our praise and our thanks. Even as we praise you we know our praise is too faint, our songs are too indistinct and our prayers too infrequent.

We come to you seeking pardon:

For the times we have failed to recognise your presence in our lives and relied on our own strength;

For the times when we have ignored your will for our lives and pursued our own concerns;

For the times when we have refused to accept the cost of following you and backed away from conflict and opposition;

For the times when we have been unwilling to offer ourselves wholly to you and tried to keep control of our lives.

Forgive us and heal us; restore and renew us, so that one day we may be presented faultless in our presence.

Weave a web of your presence around us today so that whatever task we are doing we may be aware of you and glimpse your glory and hear your voice.

And now hear us as we pray further in the words Jesus taught his disciples saying:

**OUR FATHER**

**Read: Luke 2 verses 22 - 40**

**Reflection**

Reflect for a few minutes on some part of the passage. Possibilities are: recognising Jesus in those we meet; being light in darkness; the thoughts of Mary and Joseph as they presented their infant son. This part of the service might involve music; it might involve the use of something visual; it might involve silence.

**Prayer**

This is a time for prayers for the world, for the communities in which we live; for the Church and in particular things going on in our congregations; for very young children and for very elderly people**;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

**CLOSING RESPONSES**

As Anna and Simeon recognised you in the Temple

**MAY WE RECOGNISE YOU IN THOSE WE MEET**

As people down the centuries have kept your light shining in times of darkness

**MAY WE BE LIGHT FOR THOSE IN NEED**

As Jesus grew and became strong and wise

**MAY WE GROW IN WISDOM AND WONDER AND JOY.**

**AMEN.**

**Week 2 – The Boy Jesus in the Temple**

**Leader:**

Patient God, waiting for us to grow may you use us as we are;

Constant God, with us as we learn, may we listen always for your leading;

Loving God, seeking us out of love, may the word of Christ dwell in us richly.

Whatever we do in word or deed, may we do everything in the name of Jesus.

**Opening Responses**

Compassionate God, clothe us:

**CLOTHE US WITH YOUR COMPASSION**

Kind God, clothe us:

**CLOTHE US WITH YOUR KINDNESS**

Humble God, clothe us:

**CLOTHE US WITH YOUR HUMILITY**

Merciful God, clothe us:

**CLOTHE US WITH YOUR MERCY**

Patient God, clothe us

**CLOTHE US WITH YOUR PATIENCE.**

**Read: 1 Samuel 2 verses 18 – 20 and verse 26**

**Include here a hymn or song or other music**

**Read:** Psalm 148

**Prayer**

Lord God, you are a God who notices and you notice when nobody else does when we are missing. You notice when we are missing from worship; you notice when we creep away from what we should be doing or wander off from those who need us.

You see with eyes that love even when we make you weep and with a heart that loves even when we break it.

We are sorry that we make you anxious as our parent.

Unlike Jesus who was found sitting, listening and learning, we are often to be found grumbling or arguing or daydreaming or worrying.

Forgive us we pray and ask you to come and find us where we are.

God of opportunities, thank you for the chance to grow in you.

The chance to grow in wisdom, grace and strength, to deepen our faith and learn about your love whether we are young or old, and the chance to keep on growing.

Hear us now as we pray in your Son’s words, saying:

**OUR FATHER**

**Read:** Luke2 verses 41 - 52

**Reflection**

You could reflect on Jesus in the Temple. What does this story say about him? What do you think of his reaction to his parents’ anxiety? How might you have reacted as a parent? You could compare this story with that of the young Samuel. You might want to use something visual or music or silence.

**Prayer**

This is a time for prayers for the world, for the communities in which we live; for the Church and in particular things going on in our congregations; for children and adolescents and for our work with them in our churches; for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

**CLOSING WORDS – from Colossians 3 verse 15**

**THE PEACE THAT CHRIST GIVES IS TO GUIDE YOU IN THE DECISIONS THAT YOU MAKE; FOR IT IS TO THIS PEACE THAT GOD HAS CALLEED YOU TOGETHER IN THE ONE BODY.**

**AND BE THANKFUL.**

**Week 3 – Our Church and our Community**

My idea is that in this week we could look at the variety of ways in which the Church supports the community and does things which are beneficial to society as a whole.

So … for example I am thinking of:

Fair Trade

Connections Corner

Dalmeny Café

Foodbank

Food initiative

… and things which others may think of.

A few people could say something about an area they know about and/or are involved in. there would also be a time for prayer for the various initiatives.

**Week 4 – The Temptation of Jesus**

**Leader:**

O Christ who entered into the lonely desert, and who, facing hunger, danger and temptation, did not turn aside but affirmed the way of self-giving love, strengthen us to resist the false attraction of easy answers, magic fixes, abuses of power, and the delusion that there is any way, apart from putting our trust in you, that God’s justice can be done.

**Opening Responses**

Creator God, walking in the garden

**BREATHE LIFE INTO US**

Tempted God, praying in the desert

**BREATHE LIFE INTO US**

Holy God, travelling towards the city

**BREATHE LIFE INTO US**

Mysterious God, maker and encourager

**SURPRISE US WITH ANGELS**

Revealing God, questioner and caller

**SURPRISE US WITH STORIES**

Breathing God, dancer and delighter

**SURPRISE US WITH JOY**

**Read:** Genesis 3 verses 1 – 6

**You may wish to include a piece of music or something visual here.**

**Read:**  Psalm 51

**Prayer**

As we contemplate the beauty of a time of solitude; as we crave the beauty of peace; as we often wish for more time to rest; as we long for the tranquillity of space in which we can meet and commune with God:

Help us to remember that there are many people whose days seem endless, whose lives seem too full of quiet, who are lonely and would love the clamour and noise of family around and the voices of those whom they have lost, and who long for tasks to fill up their days.

As we contemplate the austerity of giving things up for Lent, we bring to God those who experience real poverty and need, day after day after day and who are most affected by the current round of never ending price increases and who despair about how they will manage.

We give thanks that the Christ of the wilderness slows his step so that he can walk alongside all who are bowed down with the heavy burden that life has become.

We give thanks that the Christ of the wilderness offers food for the journey, healing for the road, strength for the weary, comfort for the sorrowing, grace, peace and love.

And now hear us as we pray further in the words Jesus taught his disciples saying:

**OUR FATHER**

**Read:** Luke 4 verses 1 - 13

**Reflection**

Reflect for a few minutes on temptation. You might reflect on the temptations around in the Garden of Eden, or on the Gospel passage and how Jesus was tempted. Was he really tempted if he was the Son of God? Or you might reflect, and invite others to reflect, on the temptations which face us in the modern world. This part of the service might involve music or something visual; it might involve silence.

**Prayer**

This is a time for prayers for the world, for the communities in which we live; for the Church; **for all who feel tempted and for those who find difficulty in resisting temptations around them, perhaps especially young people who face peer pressure;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

**CLOSING RESPONSES**

Wherever we travel

**GOD IS ON OUR TRACK**

Wherever we settle

**GOD IS IN OUR MIDST**

Whatever is ahead of us

**GOD WILL BE THERE BEFORE US**

God’s angels are among us

**TO KEEP US IN ALL OUR WAYS**

**THANKS BE TO GOD.**