

QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH

MIDWEEK SERVICES

MARCH 2021

During March we are in the season of Lent. The themes we are following on Sundays are not specifically focussed on Lent and so the four Midweek services will focus more closely on Lenten themes.

Week 4 –Blindness and Spiritual blindness

Leader:

O Christ, our enlightener, once and for all you broke the link between suffering and punishment, erased the line between deserving and undeserving and invited the unseeing to open their eyes to the truth about themselves. Doing this, you revealed yourself and became vulnerable. Give us insight to see the structures of injustice by which we profit, and grace to cherish all people, knowing that we all live within your love.

Opening Responses

God of darkness and light

OPEN OUR EYES TO YOUR JUSTICE

God of goodness and glory

OPEN OUR MINDS TO YOUR WISDOM

God of mercy and kindness

OPEN OUR HEARTS TO YOUR LOVE

Read: 1 Samuel 16 verse 1 and verses 6 – 7 and 10 - 13

You may wish to include music or something visual here.

Read: Psalm 23

Prayer

Be our God now, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit within us.

Be real to us in this moment, so that we may be gathered up in love.

There are times, O God, when we forget we ever knew you.

We enter an empty space or a dark night of the soul and you seem absent from us.

We forget the past experiences of your love and feel that you have left us. Our hearts are filled with doubt and the future looks lonely as we grapple with our lives and their questions and traumas. Sometimes we feel lost and we cannot find our way back to you.

Come, Holy Spirit, come

REMINDE US OF YOUR GRACE, LOVING JESUS, AND FORGIVE US WHEN WE CHOOSE TO LIVE APART FROM YOU. RETURN US TO FAITH AND ENLARGE OUR HOPE.

And now hear us as we pray in Jesus' words, saying:

OUR FATHER

Read: John 9 –read the whole chapter or selections from it.

Reflection

This should take the form of an introduction from the leader of 5 – 7 minutes **maximum**, and designed to stimulate discussion on the subject. **You might reflect on lack of sight or loss of sight and the challenges that brings to people; or on times when our lack of sight is a lack of understanding; or reflect on some aspect of the Gospel chapter.** 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 people who are blind or partially sighted; for those whose spiritual blindness means they are unable to “see” Christ and his love;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

CLOSING RESPONSES

Shield us God with your crook and your staff

BRING US SAFELY HOME

Guide us God with your truth and your goodness

BRING US SAFELY HOME

Encourage us God with your kindness

BRING US SAFELY HOME

Shepherd us God and walk with us always

BRING US SAFELY HOME.

AMEN.

This material has been adapted from “Spring” by Ruth Burgess and “Eggs and Ashes” by Ruth Burgess and Chris Polhill, both Wild Goose Publications.