

QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH

MIDWEEK SERVICES

FEBRUARY 2022

This material is adapted a little from the material used last February. It is amazing how relevant the themes are a year on. The overall theme is **“Hope and Renewal in times of Change.”** We are in a time of uncertainty in our country and there is still a degree of fear regarding Covid. In the Church of Scotland Presbyteries are undergoing major structural changes. There are also structural changes in the central administration of the Church. Congregations are facing changes because of Presbytery planning. We also face a shortage of Ministers and many congregations find it difficult to recruit office-bearers and other leaders.

Week 1 – Home

Leader:

The Lord says: When the time comes, I will answer the prayers of my people.

Opening Responses

I will betroth you to myself forever

**WITH INTEGRITY AND JUSTICE, WITH TENDERNESS
AND LOVE**

I will betroth you to myself with faithfulness

AND YOU WILL COME TO KNOW ME

I will say: You are my people

AND WE WILL ANSWER: YOU ARE OUR GOD

For once you were outside mercy

BUT NOW YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN MERCY

THIS IS OUR HOPE, OUR LIVING HOPE. WE SHALL BE GLAD.

Read: Genesis 18 verses 1 – 8

Hymn or song or other music – something that speaks of home or speaks to you of home

Read: Psalm 84

Prayer

Strong, sheltering God, we bless you for all the beautiful things of home; warmth and shelter when the wind outside is bitter; food for the body and the soul; treasured gifts and treasured memories; stability, acceptance, care.

We bless you for the chance to be ourselves; for the tasks which weave the pattern of our days; for the sweet, familiar round of ordinary things.

BLESSED ARE YOU STRONG SHELTERING GOD

But if we have ever forced our expectations or our will on those with whom we share home; or if we have taken their care for granted; if we have made our home

a place of argument; or if we have shut out people who don't belong as we do;

**HAVE MERCY ON US GOD OF FRIEND AND STRANGER;
DISTURB OUR COMPLACENCY; SHAKE OUR CIRCLES OF
CONTENTMENT; SWEEP THROUGH OUR HEARTS AND
OUR HOUSES WITH THE NEW BROOM OF YOUR SPIRIT
UNTIL LOVE IS OUR ONLY REFUGE**

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

OUR FATHER

Read: Luke 2 verses 39 - 52

Reflection

Reflect for a few minutes on what home means to you, on what the scripture passages say about home. This part of the service might involve music; it might involve the use of something visual; it might involve silence.

You might use props from home e.g. keys, ornaments, etc.

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 all whose homes are places of unhappiness, threat or insecurity; for those who have no home;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

CLOSING RESPONSES

On our hearts and on our houses

THE BLESSING OF GOD

In our coming and going

THE PEACE OF GOD

In our life and believing

THE LOVE OF GOD

At our end and new beginning

**THE ARMS OF GOD TO WELCOME US AND BRING US
HOME**

AMEN.