

QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH

MIDWEEK SERVICES

JANUARY 2022

Week 4 – Homelessness

Homelessness Sunday is usually observed on the last Sunday in January.

Leader:

I never knew his name; but each day I walked past on my way from work he was there in the doorway, huddled with his old dog.

Sometimes I gave him my apple left over from lunch, and felt good because I'd given up a tiny morsel of a meal when I had so much.

And if I did, he smiled up at me through the scruffy growth of his beard, and the dog tried to wag its tired tail as it chewed on scraps thrown out by benevolent butchers.

One day he wasn't there and I heard he'd been found dead that morning after a particularly cold night. The dog was taken into a shelter. On a string round its neck he'd hung its name "Fido" – meaning Faithful.

And *his* name? From a paper in his pocket it seems his name was Josh, short for Joshua – another name for Jesus.

Opening Responses

God, source of life and abundant love

WE GATHER TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP YOU

God, wellspring of goodness and amazing grace

WE GATHER TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP YOU

God, essence of justice and eternal joy

**MAY OUR HEARTS AND MINDS BE OPEN TO YOUR
HEALING TOUCH**

God, heartbeat of hospitality and never-failing hope

**MAY OUR HEARTS AND MINDS BE OPEN TO YOUR
HEALING TOUCH**

**Here you might want to read a hymn or poem
appropriate to our theme for Homelessness Sunday.**

Read: Psalm 84

Prayer

Loving God, within whose loving purpose each and every one of us has a valued place – is welcomed, the very hairs of our heads numbered – we confess that too often, when things are going well, we take our good fortune for granted, and we are blind to the needs of others. And so we pray that we may be content with enough and may be generous to those who lack money, food or shelter.

Jesus Christ, in whose way we seek to follow, who had a special concern for people on the margins, we confess that too often we have passed by the beggar in the street, the “Big Issue” seller at the supermarket, the person who needed our compassion. And so we pray for

victims of poverty, people who are homeless, those who are struggling to cope, and all who seek to help and support them.

Holy Spirit, permeating life, guiding us, comforting us, challenging us, we confess to our share and complicity in the failings in a society where the gap between rich and poor is still so wide and there is a desperate need for more affordable housing. And so we pray that leaders within national and local government may develop creative and compassionate policies and that all organisations and people who strive for housing and economic justice may be faithful to their task.

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

OUR FATHER

Read: Mathew 25 verses 31 – 46

Reflection

This should take the form of a short reflection by the leader. What can we as Christian people do to help those who are homeless, AND to convince our politicians that homelessness is NOT acceptable in the 21st Century?

This part of the service might involve music or something visual; it might involve silence.

Prayer

This a time for prayers for the world, for the communities in which we live; for the Church; for those

who are homeless; for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

Closing Responses

In safety or in danger

WE BELONG TO GOD

Wealthy or poor

WE BELONG TO GOD

Human, deeply human,

WE BELONG TO GOD

This material has been adapted from “Hay and Stardust” and “Winter”, both Wild Goose Publications.