

QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH

MIDWEEK SERVICES

JULY

Looking ahead in the Bible in a Year plan I see that on one Sunday in September we plan to cover Second Corinthians to Philemon – and it is also Harvest Thanksgiving! - so I thought it would be good during July Midweek services to look at 5 of those books. That still leaves plenty scope for whoever is conducting the service (or services?) on that day.

In Week 5 we look at Philemon which is very short. Try to read it before we meet.

Week 5 – Philemon – Reconciliation and Welcome

Leader:

There are different gifts, but it is the same Lord who is served through them all.

WE RECOMMIT OURSELVES TO BEING INSTRUMENTS OF GOD'S PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN HIS WORLD.

OPENING RESPONSES

If someone strikes you on the right cheek

TURN TO THEM THE LEFT CHEEK ALSO

If someone takes your coat away

GIVE THEM YOUR SHIRT AS WELL

If anyone makes you go one mile

GO WITH THEM TWO MILES

As you wish people to treat you

TREAT THEM JUST THE SAME WAY

Hymn or song: You might like to read Hymn 206: “Break not the circle of enabling love” or 706: “For the healing of the nations.” I haven’t used either before but they include a theme of reconciliation. They are both by the same author, Fred Kaan.

Read Psalm 1

Prayer

God of the heavens and the earth, there is nothing in all creation that is beyond your power for you have made everything that is.

FATHER GOD, WE ADORE YOU

You are the one who brings countless blessings to our lives.

FATHER GOD, WE ADORE YOU.

You are the one who is beside us in our bright moments and our dark moments alike.

FATHER GOD, WE ADORE YOU.

For friends who are around us: **THANK YOU GOD**

For friends who are far off: **THANK YOU GOD**

For friends who make us sit up and think about you:

THANK YOU GOD.

For the friends who help increase our faith: **THANK YOU GOD**

For the friends who have gone to be with you: **THANK YOU GOD**

Forgive us Lord when we fail to love one another as you have commanded us.

Forgive us when we have quarrelled with someone and failed to be reconciled with him or her.

Forgive us for the times when we have failed to show kindness to others.

Forgive us when we have failed to honour you.

Loving God, may we show your love, patience and forgiveness to all.

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

OUR FATHER

Read: Philemon

Reflection

Reflect for 5 – 7 minutes. **Please keep within that time frame!**

Philemon is about reconciliation and it's about welcome. You could reflect on either or both. In a world where protest is becoming almost normal there is clearly a need for reconciliation. This part of the service might involve music or a short drama; it might involve the use of "props" or something else visual; it might involve silence.

Here is an adaptation of a meditation called “A Letter to Phil” written by David Lemmon and included in “Angels and Archangels” edited by Ruth Burgess and published by the Iona Community.

A letter from Paul – that’s great!

It’s been delivered by Onesimus. I never thought I’d see him again.

He used to be our slave and was quite useful at times; (that’s what his name means) but then he stole money from me and ran away. He ended up in Roma and met Paul and now he’s a Christian. I also became a Christian because of Paul.

It seems Onesimus has been useful to Paul and become like a son to him. Well, now, he wants me to welcome Onesimus back.

What about justice? He stole from me and he ran away! He owes me! Paul says he’ll pay up if Onesimus owes me anything but I don’t see how he can because Paul is apparently in prison.

AND I’m a respectable businessman and a church leader. I can’t be having criminals and fugitives from justice in my house. What will people think?

What did Paul tell us once? “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, all are one in Christ Jesus.”

Well, that’s OK in theory, but in today’s world it doesn’t work like that, does it?

What should I do?

What do you think I should do?

Prayer

This is a time for prayers for the world, for the communities in which we live; for the Church and those who minister here in any capacity; **for how we move forward with worship in our churches; for those who are sick at this time; for all health workers and carers; for those whose income is uncertain; for our country as we move forward from the coronavirus crisis;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

CLOSING BLESSING

Peace among nations
Peace between neighbours
Peace between person and person
in love of the God of life.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST ABOVE ALL PEACE.

LET US GO IN PEACE.