

QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH

MIDWEEK SERVICES

JUNE

I have been looking ahead at the plan for The Bible in a Year. When we come to the minor prophets we are only looking at Jonah and so I thought it would be good to look at three of the others in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th weeks of June to see what they have to say to us today. We began with Joel and the theme of Visions and Dreams. Then we looked at Habakkuk with the theme of Response to God's "Absence." We now turn to Haggai. It would be good if you could read the whole of this short book before we "meet." This material is for 25th June.

Week 4 – Rebuilding the Temple

Leader:

I will be with you. This is my promise.

I will always be with you. Don't be afraid.

For now you struggle.

You never have enough food, wine or clothing.

Peace and prosperity will come.

I am going to shake things up.

I am going to turn everything upside down.

OPENING RESPONSES

God of the past who has fathered and mothered us

WE ARE HERE TO THANK YOU

God of the future who is always ahead of us

WE ARE HERE TO TRUST YOU

God of the present, here in the midst of us

WE ARE HERE TO PRAISE YOU

God of life beyond us within us

WE REJOICE IN YOUR GLORIOUS LOVE

Hymn or song: singing is a bit challenging by zoom! You might like to read Hymn 469: “Restore, O Lord, the honour of your name” or 468: “Son of God, eternal Saviour”, especially verse 2

Read Psalm 145 verses 1 – 5 and 17 - 21

Prayer

Sing to the Lord a new song:

FOR HE HAS DONE MARVELLOUS THINGS.

Every day we will bless our God:

AND PRAISE HIS NAME FOR EVER AND EVER.

Let the seas sing and the trees clap their hands for God is our righteous judge and also our loving Father.

God of the living, we see you everywhere in creation and we see you in so many marvellous things which have been made by human hands, including churches and cathedrals and temples. We give thanks for the buildings in which we worship. May we never forget

that your church is never a building, but always your people worshipping you.

Sing to the Lord a new song:

FOR HE HAS DONE MARVELLOUS THINGS.

Lord, we bring our prayer of confession.

Hear our cry, Lord, in your mercy.

YOU LISTEN TO OUR PRAYER AND YOU FORGIVE US.

When we have acted as if you were far away, consigning you to history so we could forget to follow you and instead suit ourselves:

Hear our cry, Lord, in your mercy.

YOU LISTEN TO OUR PRAYER AND YOU FORGIVE US.

When we have been so wrapped up in our own needs that we have lost sight of the needs of those around us:

Hear our cry, Lord, in your mercy.

YOU LISTEN TO OUR PRAYER AND YOU FORGIVE US.

Give us what we need to live our lives by faith:

**GIVE US YOUR VISION, YOUR PATIENCE, YOUR PEACE,
YOUR MUSIC AND YOUR PROMISE OF ETERNITY.**

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

OUR FATHER

Read: Haggai 2 verses 1 - 9

John 4 verses 19 - 24

Reflection

Reflect for 5 – 7 minutes. **Do try to keep within that time frame!**

Church as we know it has been replaced in recent times by a number of imaginative ways of communicating the Gospel. You might reflect on what we can learn from this time about how we “do Church”; how would you like to “rebuild the Temple”? You might see this passage as raising questions of stewardship: are we too tied to expensive buildings? Should we be using our experiences during the pandemic to consider how we can use our resources better – people, money, buildings?

These are just suggestions – you will have other ideas. 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.

You might want to use this meditation:

Good news and bad news

Haggai was a wise old man, the last of his generation. He was like a grandfather to the people, and when he spoke they all knew it would be good, because Haggai wasn't just old and wise, he was also a man who heard from God.

The people were sad. So many of their friends had moved away, and all the good things were just memories. It seemed like nothing good was ever going to happen again.

Then Haggai called them all together, everyone, even Zerubbabel the Governor, and Joshua, who was the High Priest's son. Everyone who was anyone came when Haggai called.

"I've got a new message!" he shouted. "I've got good news and bad news."

"God says this: 'There are going to be more difficult times ahead, but be strong! All of you be strong: yes, you, Zerubbabel, and you, Joshua. Every last one of you: be strong! Because soon, very soon, it will all be good again. In fact, it will be better than good – it will be brilliant!'"

From "Fig Trees and Furnaces" edited by Ruth Burgess and published by the Iona Community.

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 take steps forward from the coronavirus crisis;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

CLOSING RESPONSES

God of goodness:

MAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES TO BRING GOOD THINGS TO OTHERS

God of justice:

MAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES TO BRING YOUR JUSTICE TO OTHERS

God of change:

MAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES ALWAYS WILLING TO BE CHANGED

God of growth:

MAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES ALWAYS WILLING TO GROW IN YOU

God of sharing:

MAY WE SHARE WHAT WE HAVE WITH OTHERS FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR LOVE