

# QUEENSFERRY PARISH CHURCH

## MIDWEEK SERVICES

### FEBRUARY 2021

Last February the overall theme for our midweek services was “Hope and Renewal in times of Change.” That included change in our country and change in our country and also in the Church of Scotland where Presbyteries and the National Church were, and still are, undergoing major structural changes. The ability to make progress with these changes has been delayed by the pandemic. Progress in dealing with vacancy process has resulted in delays for congregations and for those seeking charges. We lack a sufficient number of Ministers and many congregations find it difficult to recruit office-bearers and other leaders. But we have not stood still and many congregations have found imaginative ways of continuing the worship of the Church as well as continuing its administration. We are always in a time of change, but we are also in a time of uncertainty and anxiety too. So, the overall theme this February is:

**“Hope and Renewal”** The individual themes for each week provide four different aspects to think about. The introduction and the opening responses for each week are the same.

## **Week 4 – Promised Land**

### **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.**

### **Leader:**

The Lord says: When the time comes, heaven and earth will answer each other and I will love the unloved.

**Read:** Joshua 4 verses 1 – 7 and 19 - 24

**Here you might want to include a hymn or song or poem with a theme of gladness and joy in keeping with reaching the Promised Land**

**Read:** Psalm 105 verses 1 - 11

## **Prayer**

Lord God, we bless you for the infinite beauty of created things: sand, wind wave; animals and birds; we bless you for the love of land and people; for the vine and the fruit and the good wine. We bless you for the endurance of hope; for the promise of renewal; and for fleeting moments on the mountaintop.

### **BLESSED ARE YOU LORD GOD OF ALL CREATION**

But if we have forgotten those who bear the marks of exile or desert, or suffering or injustice upon their hands and feet and in their hearts, and we have allowed them to go on suffering, and thus failed them and you, Lord **HAVE MERCY ON US, GOD WHO BRINGS US DOWN TO EARTH, WHO GROUNDS US IN JUSTICE AND WHO ROOTS US IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS. GIVE FLESH TO OUR WORDS AND WORSHIP WITH THE BREATH AND PEACE OF YOUR SPIRIT UNTIL JOY IS OUR ONLY HOLY COMMON GROUND.**

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

**Read:** John 15 verses 16 - 17

## **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 could discuss what the idea of Promised Land means to you and**

**what the scripture passages say about it. Is the promise always fulfilled?**

This part of the service might involve music; it might involve something visual; **as symbols of the Promised Land you might use milk and honey, or fruit or flowers; or you might use something that makes a joyful noise;** it might involve silence.

### **Prayer**

This is a time for prayers for the world, for the communities in which we live; for the Church and in particular the way current restrictions stop us doing what we want to do; **for communities and nations; for stewardship of the earth;** for those known to us to be in particular need of our prayers; for ourselves.

### **CLOSING RESPONSES**

Look at your hands; see the touch and the tenderness

**GOD'S OWN FOR THE WORLD**

Look at your feet; see the path and the direction

**GOD'S OWN FOR THE WORLD**

Look at your heart; see the fire and the love

**GOD'S OWN FOR THE WORLD**

Look at the cross; see God's son and our saviour

**GOD'S OWN FOR THE WORLD**

This is God's world

**WE WILL SERVE GOD IN IT.**

**AMEN.**

This material has been adapted from “The Pattern of our Days”, a Wild Goose publication, edited by Kathy Galloway.