

# New Kilpatrick

Podcast

28th June 2020

Matthew 10:40-42



## Welcome

Hello and thank you for the invitation to share worship with you today. From wherever you are, this has become a special and unique place for us to meet and worship and pray together. So thank you for the invite.

I'm Roddy Hamilton, the minister in New Kilpatrick Parish Church and we create a space together today to reflect and pause and take a deeper breath, finding ourselves in a more profound way, among all that is happening in the world.

It is good to find these moments where we can tap into something greater than the news cycles, and seek some solace, understanding, comfort and strength. This morning we offer something slightly different from usual, a spiritual essay of sorts around the theme of welcome. Let us be together.



## Gathering

Holy God  
Holy and generous  
Holy and loving  
Holy and beyond our words.  
We pause  
and take breath  
breathing in your spirit of life

Holy God  
Holy and present  
Holy and constant  
Holy and companion on the way  
we pause  
and seek silence  
beyond which you still are

Holy God  
Holy and true  
Holy and gracious  
Holy and comforting for our  
world  
we pause  
and turn towards that  
which is deep within us

And find you  
waiting



## Worship Space

I'm lighting a candle now, a sign of presence, as old as light itself. God's first act, was creating the light; God, being present. In that light we still gather, an ancient light from the dawn of creation, and still calls us together wherever we are. Let us welcome each other imagining the dispirit community we are, on phones, on podcasts, in cars, on mountains, in living rooms and kitchens. We are God's People, still, gathering in this first and brightest light of God.

## Psalm 4

Sing, O my voice,  
a song for tomorrow.  
Find words  
reimagined with promise and life.

Sing, O congregation,  
the poems not yet written,  
born in expectation  
of what this journey can become.

Sing, O you people,  
of the God who is at hand,  
reborn in the questions  
we honour and voice together.

Sing, O our souls,  
of possibility in the present  
honed by a faith  
heading for tomorrow.

Sing, all you people,  
both lament and celebration  
and in such heady combination  
let our hopes arise.



## Emotions

Since lockdown began, myself and Kirstin Freeman, the Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Bearsden have collaborated in writing a new psalm each week. You have just heard Psalm 4. Psalms have always been one of the go-to books of the bible to find expression of our emotions in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in.

So together we write each psalm, and they have, in a lesser or greater way, expressed the feelings each week of lockdown has brought. In the first weeks, they began with lament and loss and have grown to be reshaped round anxiety and worry as we have settled into the length of this experience. But what has also grown is the possibility of renewal and transformation, as we have begun to recognise what has been exposed in these months about our relationships, our institutions, the priorities we had three months ago and what they are now, and in recognising those, recognise too places of new hope, having become clearer about that which we need to transform and renew.

Psalm 9 perhaps expresses that.

## Psalm 9

In the chill of a summer dawn  
as bird call saturates the air  
heralding new life  
we pause

as bees sip from the dew heavy grass  
before fleetingly visiting each flower  
seeking for richer sweetness.  
we pause

In kaleidoscopic changing sky  
decorated with wispy clouds reminiscent  
of the conta trails that once painted the sky.  
we pause

In this day, just another in so many ways  
you O God, already abide  
waiting to surprise and delight us.

As we pause in the moment  
you pause with us  
inviting us to breathe and enter the day.



## Pausing

Perhaps it is the pausing we need most. Lockdown has reduced the activity levels for many folk but there is a difference between doing less, and pausing.

Pausing brings an awareness of things. It is a choice to listen differently. A choice to be aware of different senses, to engage with the world a little more deeply with them, feel, be prepared to feel differently about something, that isn't all about the surface.

And we don't pause easily. I often feel guilty doing that because pausing feels like doing nothing, and I should be doing something, there is plenty to do.

Yet it isn't doing nothing. It is doing something very human and spiritual. It is an expensive thing to do because by pausing, you stop doing something else and shift your awareness and find yourself in a different place, or lane, or moment. Or maybe it is just to find yourself and these emotions we carry, and these stories we shape, these memories that we hide or hold onto.



## Shaping Tomorrow

Shaping the tomorrow beyond tomorrow.

And there is the hope, the ability to look beyond the moment, the issue, the time and live towards what is yet to come.

It is a faith position. Not only Christianity, or Judaism or even any religious faith. Faith is not limited to religion. Indeed it is a human condition at times to have faith that enables us to see and therefore live towards a time that is different from now, better, more life-giving.

Living towards something yet to come.

Here's the sixth psalm we wrote:

### Psalm 6

When we've thought too much,  
and run out of words...

When we've tried to understand  
and found a more profound silence...

When we've engaged with the future  
but found no blue-print or plan...

Send out your spirit, O God,  
and twist together the strands of this story,  
that we might weave together  
new songs to sing  
from these Babylonian riverbanks,  
hope-filled for this time  
where 'Tomorrow' has already begun,  
shaping the Tomorrow beyond tomorrow  
and the Tomorrow beyond the tomorrow after that...





## Reflection

When you listen to Jesus words about welcome and providing for your guest, there is very much a 'now' element in them, responding to a need, a moment. But that is what relationship is, and what the Gospel continually talks about. Welcoming someone establishes that relationship: by investing in the 'now' of that relationship we are reshaping the future. You can't get to the future without starting in the present.

So while we hear Jesus words about how we look towards our neighbour, or how we make space for the widow and the orphan, or how we welcome the stranger, these do two things: they change what happens in the present as we respond to needs through hospitality, and clearly, by changing that present, by providing for needs, the future shifts as well.

So when Jesus speaks about welcoming folk, this is what is happening, whatever you do now towards someone, moves the future in a particular direction. We make the space for the future to grow depending on how we treat others now.

In the west we often forget this future element in things. We are instant consumers. We can expect a book bought on the internet to arrive that same day, we send text messages and expect the reply to be almost instant.

## Scripture

The scripture passage we use today helps us here. We take our bible passages from the revised common lectionary, a global pattern of readings for the world church. Today many round the global church are reading this passage from Matthew 10:40-42

“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”



Yet the culture of welcome that Jesus explains, is not only about that instant welcome, and drawing a person in and being hospitable to them. The culture was quite clear that you never welcomed individuals but you welcomed all they were associated with, their whole household, their beliefs, their family.

Here's Jesus words that explain that culture: Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

In making space for a person, we make space for all that is bound to them. We may not necessarily agree with or support those things. But we aren't asked to be hospitable only to those we agree with but to all our neighbours.

In making that space, the future becomes more fluid as we don't know how this relationship, this

## Reflection continued

connection with our guest will evolve. We are opening ourselves to the possibility of change, through different points of view, or seeing the world from a different perspective.

Shaping the tomorrow beyond tomorrow in what we do towards our neighbour now. Welcoming people does that. In the culture of the kingdom, making space for guests, creating hospitality, shapes the tomorrow beyond tomorrow.

And we honour that person, by pausing and reflecting, taking a breath, considering them and how they shape us and how we have maybe shaped them, especially as our guest, in Jesus own words, has been not just Jesus himself, but the whole company of heaven.



## Prayer

Loving God  
who welcome us  
and all we are

may we make space to welcome  
you  
and the whole company of heaven  
of followers and travellers  
of doubters and questioners  
of denominations and none  
of children and adults  
of women and men  
of saints and sinners

and in such a band of believers  
and doubters  
may we find the space  
reserved  
and honed  
and inviting  
each of us

Holy God  
may we travel deeper into your  
love  
reshaped by its blessing  
as it encourages us  
leads us  
towards others  
love broad enough  
to make table space

hospitable space  
gracious space  
for enemy and friend alike

and in that radical  
dangerous space  
may there be time to pause  
with our neighbour  
knowing such moments  
shape the tomorrow beyond  
tomorrow

Loving God  
may we shift the world  
in living kingdom-wise

and in these days  
so different to us all  
recognise the space they make  
to be different tomorrow  
because of what we invite today

Holy God  
Loving God  
God of the pauses and the  
welcome  
God of the present and future too  
hear us  
as we share the Lord Prayer

Amen

## Benediction

Go in peace, my friends  
Go in generous love  
and hospitable welcome

And the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ  
The love of God  
and the commonwealth of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
Evermore  
Amen



## Thank you

Thank you for sharing the journey today, a different approach to our reflection. It is always good to receive feedback so we may always offer something closer to what people are searching for. You can do that by a phone call or an email or on the website [nkchurch.org.uk](http://nkchurch.org.uk). On the website you will find all the psalms, some of which you have heard today along with videos for each. There too you'll find daily prayers, meditation and all our social activities and worship material from each week.

Thank you to Gillian and Jimmy Dinsmore for sharing in the service today. It is greatly appreciated and I hope you all keep well, safe safe and catch up next time. Take care.



