**New Kilpatrick**

**Podcast**

**15th May 2022**

**John 13:31-35**

**Gathering**

Hello… I’m Roddy Hamilton the minister of new Kilpatrick Parish and… once more… thank you for the invitation to join you today…

Martin Luther King described his vision of what would result from the fight for desegregation in the U.S this way:

*“the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the Beloved Community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opponents into friends. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of humankind.”*

The love he was talking about… was first described 2000 years ago in a vision Jesus had for his disciples… That is the place we meet today, in the art of a faith that calls us to love one another…

**Prayer**

When love imagines a world

And the colours spin into being

And landscapes rise

And waters flow

We give thanks

That such a universe has been made possible

And we have been invited into its life

And we seek you, O God

Love-maker

In every shade and texture

When love imagines life

And diversity runs its many hues

And creatures grow

And humanity stretches

We give thanks

That this great journey of life

Has invited us to be part of it

And we find you, O God

Love-shaper

In the heart of it all

When love imagines hope

But we find conflicts and fear

And we turn against love

And seek things only for self

We seek forgiveness

That the great arc of creation

Is tarnished and bruised

And we find you, O God

Love-giver

Renewing and forgiving

When love imagines us

And we find poetry and faith

Through which to speak of you

And we worship

And seek you in each other

We give thanks

For a God who lives as our companion

And seeks out life in its abundance

And we worship you, O God

Love-shaper

Living into what is yet to come

So be it

**Reading John 13:31-35**

When he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, “Where I am going, you cannot come.” I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’

**Let us Pause**

A new commandment

Love. One. Another.

Not your enemy

Not your neighbour

Not the poor

Not the Other

Love. One. Another.

Each other in your community

When the world stands against love

You must love all the more

Each Other

In the midst of disagreements

You must love all the more

In the midst of struggles

You must love all the more

IN establishing the church

You must love all the more

Love.

One.

Another.

It is where it all begins…

**Reflection**

Apparently this year… we have a good chance not to be at the bottom of the table… Apparently this year… we might get more that Nil Points… in fact… apparently this year… we might get into double digits… I am of course talking about then Eurovision Song Contest…

And at the time of recording this service… I have no idea where we ranked… but we live in hope… That seems to be our constant response to Eurovision… Maybe it is deeper than that… that there is more that binds us than hope… though the is a strong emotion…

Maybe we get a sense every so often that there is more that binds us than divides us… I wish we could say that more often…

There is a single radical phrase Jesus uses… that says there is more that binds us than divides us… Love one another… Here he doesn’t say… love your enemy… love yours neighbour… He says… love one another… those already in the community of Christ…

Why? Just one another?… The bible does not come to us without history and baggage… John’s community… to which he is writing this gospel… is divided in some way… there is more that divides then than unites them… and this story of Jesus is a response to that… Listen… Listen to what Jesus said… Love one another…

But the question is not really why… the question is how… and John gives us an example from Jesus life for that very purpose… Just before these words… we have the story of Jesus washing the disciples feet…

Jesus is doing something… the disciples would never have done for each other… In washing feet… Jesus has singularly… as no other act could have done… humbled himself… In washing the feet on another…It washes away all the status and expectation of the world… We meet each other in a place where all standards have gone… and all you have to give… is something of yourself… doing whatever is necessary in order to respond to the needs of another.

But… This is more than just a sign… or a symbolic act… This is often grounded in vulnerability. It actually matters. It has a cost to it, and if the act is not received by the other, then there is a loss of face, or friendship, or something more serious.

But… and here’s the gospel… it is worth the cost. What we offer in giving of self like this… is something more valuable than the loss received in making the sacrifice… The equation doesn’t balance…

This is how we live our faith, living lightly enough in the world to accept and be ready for such cost.

Such a way of living, ought to be the very thing that unite the great variety of Christian traditions and cultures we have across the world… evidence that there is more that unites than divides… Such a way of loving is way beyond human borders and institutional edges…

You cannot reduce this down any further… This is pure gospel… and no one can mess around with it… If we do, all we are doing is holding a mirror up to whatever else we say love is, and notice how far we have travelled from Jesus original words and intent…

Love one another… it actually matters… especially for all of us now as our society changes and we choose what we will become… love one another… naive? costly? vulnerable?…

*It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opponents into friends. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of humankind.*

**News**

Christian Aid Week

**Prayers for Others**

Holy God

Loving God

Present God

We seek peace in our world

And we seek justice

And may we begin such a prayer

With the longing to love one another

And shape that kind of community

Here among and between us

In such love

We pray for those places in conflict

In Ukraine and Syria and Somalia and Afghanistan

Yet those cabinet tables of governments too

Where preparations are made

And policies decided

And ambition met

There too

For peace

And for justice

Shaped by a love that gives of itself

In such love

We pray for those places of poverty

Around our world

Where economy and pandemics

Are added to environmental issues

As climate changes

And cost of living grows

For those who have no other chances

Other than the generosity of others

Where the south is given little chance

Unless the west changes

For that change we pray

Towards a global peace for the poorest

And justice for the hungry

Shaped by a love that gives of itself

In such love

We pray for Christian Aid Week

For refugees from Afghanistan, Syria and Ukraine

And gather those closest to us

Families and friends

Those ill physically and mentally

Those fearful and anxious about life

Jobs

Exams

The future

For each we pray

For peace that brings encouragement

And justice that beings hope

Shaped by a love that gives of itself

So be it

Amen

**Benediction**