**New Kilpatrick**

**YouTube**

**Matthew 28:16-20**

**Sunday 7th May 2023**

**Gathering**

King of kings and Lord of lords

Yet shepherd, companion, and servant

This is how we shall speak of the one

Everything we believe, and do, points to

So, let us gather in the echo of coronations

And find the one who ordains all monarchs

The same one who walks beside us

Companion to the least and the lost

We worship together

Whoever we are

As one community

In the name of love

**Introduction**

Hello… I’m Roddy Hamilton the minister of New Kilpatrick Parish… and if you are watching this on Sunday morning we are meeting with the Boys’ Brigade celebrating their 125th anniversary… as well as celebrating the coronation … and we are about to have a picnic right here in the garden with lots of royal themes, activities, and all just for fun: an excuse to bring us together, so if you are to too far away or too late, you’d be welcome to join us… But let’s sing together ... even on our own… knowing others are joining in somewhere…

**Prayer**

Holy God

Humble and generous

Servant and companion

May our prayers shape us

In the pauses and the stories

And make this time holy

Sacred

Hallowed

A meeting place of heaven and earth

And in this thin slice of time and place

We gather in your name

Hoping beyond hope

For a love that redeems

And renews

And holds us close

That it might rebirth the world

With justice and hope

May we hold such words for the world

Speaking them when it is ready to hear

May we be the love you have incarnated

That opens the gates for all

That each may find a place within your community

May we welcome

An honest place

Where questions are encouraged

And debate a principle of belief

That no one is excluded

By limited doctrine

And narrow interpretations

Creator

When all is said and done

May we be simply

Kind

Generous

Compassionate

Loving

And mostly

Human

**Scripture Introduction**

This passage has been latterly known as the great commission… but it is not a term Jesus would have used… and if he said these words… he probably didn’t intend them to be used as a commission to go and get new disciples as if all the church was about membership…

I think… and what I think isn’t worth much… but you have to link this passage at the end of Matthew with the passage at the beginning… the sermon on the mount… Both are on hills… Moses went up a hill to get the ten commandments… and he died on a hill… Mount Nebo… Jesus the new Moses… and I think this passage was originally part of the sermon on the mount and has been moved here… because it actually says nothing… just go and get more members… unless we understand it as a call to a radical way of living that the sermon on the mount illustrates… Go and make disciples means nothing unless it is linked to the sermon…

Then there is that word that has been translated as ‘Go’… It has come down to us as a command… yet the Greek doesn’t really say that… It rather says… ‘As you go’… in other words… as you go into the world… as you live justly… make disciples… In other words… make radical relationships… make just practices… enflesh the sermon… as you go in the everyday relationships you make… It’s really not about the church at all…

But that just my thoughts… You can make up your own minds…

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20**

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’

**Reflection**

My mum was a nurse… long time ago… though maybe I shouldn’t say that… but she tells a story of someone she was looking after… who wore a bracelet she wouldn’t take off… ever…

It was silver… with a wee silver cage attached to it… and inside the cage was a chip of stone… and she said this was a piece of the stone of destiny… because there was someone in the family… who was part of the group that stole the stone… and brought it back to Scotland…

I imagine it is true… but I don’t know… but it is a good story…

It is just one of the many, many symbols we witness at the coronation in Westminster… many of them ancient… and some more ancient than that… the stone of Scone is one of them … because Scottish kings and queens didn’t have a throne apparently… no, it was the stone of Scone they used… which was about grounding them… something solid and even more ancient than them…

A coronation… and they are rare not just in time but in culture too as there is no royal family in Europe that gets crowned… is a service that is full of symbolism…

From orbs to gloves, spurs to robes, even the crown… all are designed to point beyond the monarch… to something he or she represents… bigger concepts such as fairness… servanthood… authority… All of them point to the greater authority… of God… That is what a coronation is…

The archbishop who presided over George VI coronation… whose name was the fabulous Cosmo Lang… wrote of the coronation… behind the things that are seen and temporal… are the things that are unseen and eternal…

And that is perhaps something to remember when we read such passages as we read today about Jesus commissioning the disciples…

There is an emptiness about the passage if you read is as an instruction to go and make disciples as if we were simply trying to increase the numbers of folk in the church…

It is bigger than that ...The Greek actually says… As you go… in other words… as you live out your lives… make disciples… In that we see that there is something bigger going on… we are bigger than the church … God is bigger than the church… behind it is something unseen and eternal…

We are always pointing beyond ourselves in how we live out our lives… The church is just a symbol… a sign… of something beyond itself… It doesn’t exist for its own good… though sometimes you feel it does as it tries to enliven a rather spent institution…

As you go… as you live… as you journey… be a sign of that which is unseen and eternal… the king of kings… the royal priesthood… the God who calls and ordains each of us… to turn towards our neighbour and serve them… and in doing so… point beyond ourselves… living as a symbol… to that which is unseen and eternal.

**Statement of Faith - Pledging Allegiance**

1: As you go

2: Go and be

A: Love for our neighbour

B: Love for our enemy

A: Love for the least

B: Love for the lost

BB1: We will go

BB2: And as we go

**All: We will be love in the world**

1: As you go

2: Go and be

A: The dove of peace

B: Peace in our time

A: The prince of peace

B: Peace that passes all understanding

BB1: We will go

BB2: And as we go

**All: We will be peace in the world**

1: As you go

2: Go and be

A: The way of forgiveness

B: The way of mending

A: The way of renewal

B: The way of freedom

BB1: We will go

BB2: And as we go

**All: We will be forgiveness in the world**

1: As you go

2: Go and be

A: Hope kept alive

B: Hope that springs eternal

A: Hope’s triumph

B: Hope against hope

BB1: We will go

BB2: And as we go

**All: We will be hope in the world**

**News**

**Prayers**

Creating God

King of kings

In this coronation season

We pause

In this kingdom community

And pledge our love

Our hope

Our vision

Our living

To your greater community

And as we talk of thrones

And sceptres

And robes

May we see your throne

On the pavement sides of our world

And your sceptre

Rising over the places we are to speak your authority

And see your robe

As the one that covers the cold and hungry and least

God of this world

May our monarchs

Point us to you

That sense of calling

Towards all people

Of every faith and none

May we be servants of all

As we serve one another

And in all the pomp and pageantry

May we never forget a world

In which we are called to be your subjects

Toward Sudan’s warring

Afghanistan’s utter poverty

Ukraine’s conflict

Israel/Palestine’s relationship

Real people

Who seem to be worth less than others

King of Kings

Save us from ourselves

With the love that calls us to be

Your radical followers

Your generous disciples

On the way to the kingdom of love

So be it

Amen

**Benediction**