**New Kilpatrick**

**Sunday 24th September 2023**

**Podcast**

**Psalm 95:1-7**

**Intro**

Bring on the wonder

Bring creation’s glory

Tangled with our questions

Bring the curve of alleluias

To the cracks of life

Bring both the uncertainties and the joys of our living

The worries we carry for others

And those who worry about us

Bring our hunger

Our needs

Our prayers

Bring our all

And belong

For we belong here

And we belong together

**Gathering**

Hello… I’m Roddy Hamilton the minister of New Kilpatrick Parish and thank you for making the time to share time with you together… It is the gift of worship to find that space… that is greater than us… and find we all belong in it… together… Hopefully that is how we feel today… belonging together yet in the presence of something bigger than us all… In such a space we worship… Let us do so…

**Prayer**

Holy God

Silent one

Pause in the moment

There when the words run out

Creating Love

Energy of life

Creation’s great imagination

Presence beyond

Within

Around

How might we pray?

Silently

Lingering in the presence

With nothing to do

Just be

May we let go the rules

Fold away the traditions

And dare ourselves to be

In a place unfamiliar

Wordlessly present

In an awkward holiness

Waiting on each other

Nothing to offer

Nothing to receive

Just being

Safe

In sacred beauty

A wordless poem

Present

Holy One

So be it

**Reading Psalm 95:1-7**

O come, let us sing to the Lord;  
    let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us clear our throats, fill our lungs

Find our voice and break open the alleluias to our God

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
    let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

May our worship be filled with a chorus of grateful hearts

In harmony and out of harmony, it doesn’t matter, with an abundance of praise

For the Lord is a great God,  
    and a great King above all gods.

From oak forests and mountain ranges

Star fields and plate tectonics

We see the vivid imagination

Of the midwife of everything

In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
    the heights of the mountains are his also.

Journeying down through the great glaciers

We witness the deep time of the earth

And looking up to the mountain tops

We see the vastness of transformation

The sea is his, for he made it,  
    and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

The waters flow, the waters you produced

The land rises, the land you whispered into being

O come, let us worship and bow down,  
    let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

May our souls soar as our heads bow

Our knees bend before one who spoke our names

For he is our God,

She is our creator

    and we are the people of his pasture,  
    and the sheep of his hand.

The stuff of legend

In the corridors of heaven

**Music**

**Reflection**

There is an argument that you don’t need church to worship God… and whosoever holds that argument is correct… You don’t…

Last fortnight I was standing on Luskentyre beach in Harris… and I was at Callanish stones in the driech Lewis beauty… I was at Ness Point in a gale at the very top of Lewis… which is the only time you want to go to Ness Point and watch the awesome power of nature throw itself at the stacks that have stood there for countless generations… and stood in each place… with that primal sense of something bigger than myself… and some deep-down awe… in the true sense of the word… and yes… I totally agree… you don’t need church in order to worship… Each of these places held… and still holds… a wonder that bends your soul… and you know this place is special… unique… Gods poetry of creation…

Yet… still… many do gravitate towards church… digitally or in person… and the worship offered… the patterns… the community… the communal words… traditions and hymns that cause that same soaring of our souls…

A place of encounter… Not an experience… but a place where we meet something… that goes right through us… finds us out… sparks our spirit… There is some engagement… It is not something done to us…

Encounter means an unexpected meeting, unplanned… and that is perhaps the secret of worship… we engage and often what we receive… is unexpected…

It is a word… perhaps… we don’t expect always… something unexpected in worship… We can have quite a strict diet of worship… we know exactly what is happening… as if we have tamed the spirit…

What might our worship look like… if we are less rigid… less comfortable and familiar… (yet safe!) … in our worship patterns… Might that lead to an encounter? …

Whatever we do… it is the continual telling of the story of God… a story that has never stopped… Our worship tells and retells ancient words… and whatever a preacher does… it is to open up these words… so that people hear them for the first time… A fresh encounter… a fresh surprise…

Thus, whoever preaches… is offering something new for themselves… These age-old stories… told and retold… still contain something new to be heard… A fresh insight for this particular community… a new context…

Preaching was probably better in the past because preachers had far more time to study… and keep learning… and didn’t have to spend so much time on administration and plans and meetings… They invested themselves in worship by continuing to study… and learn… and broaden their own encounters… so that the worshipping community has a fresh encounter…

It was live… and a-live…

So, whatever we do… our worship is to be fresh… not doing the same thing over and over again as if this time… a fresh encounter will happen… Perhaps it will but in offering a new space each time… reshaping the pattern each time… and never being found doing the same thing twice… there is space again… for an encounter with the holy… an unexpected… unplanned… unforeseen moment where the world cracks open a little more… faith is reshaped a little… the Word curves in an unexpected direction…

You don’t need to go to church for that… Callanish Stone will do that fine… but we aren’t there every week… we’re here… and this is the newest… most unexpected place to be every time we gather… to encounter God…

**News**

**Prayer**

Creating God

In every place we find ourselves

In every part of the world

We pray

For an encounter with peace

In Yemen, Syria, Ukraine

For an encounter with justice

For the hungry, the displaced, the refugee

For an encounter with freedom

For the oppressed, the trafficked, the enslaved

For an encounter with home

For those in boats, crossing borders for their safety

For an encounter with each other

For those living in fear of each other,

For an encounter with love

For those who know only abuse and imbalanced relationships

For an encounter with healing

For those who are ill mentally and physically

For an encounter with inclusion

For those excluded because of gender and culture and economy

For an encounter with honesty

For those forgotten by wealth and   
trapped in poverty

Creating God

In every place we find ourselves

In every part of the world

We pray

So be it  
Amen

**Benediction**