

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Sunday 28th February 2021

grantonchurch.org.uk

Granton



The Church of Scotland

Join this Sunday's service at 10.30am

By computer/smartphone - go to grantonchurch.org.uk and follow the link.

By telephone - just follow these steps:

- Phone 0131 460 1196
- Then enter the meeting ID : 982 2448 2457
- Then enter #
- Then enter the meeting password : 905841
- Then enter #

You will now be able to hear the service and you will also be able to speak to everyone as well if you wish.



facebook
LIVE

Catch up on Sunday Services

If you are not able to catch the service on Sunday mornings yet still want to catch the service later, we broadcast the services on Facebook Live. Check out the church website or go straight to our Facebook page.

People have been asking how they can support the ongoing work of the congregation. Go to the website and look at the top of the page where you will see a Donation button. Click it, then you will have a few options from contacting the Treasurer and giving direct or via card or click on the Paypal button. Your donation will help our church to keep making a positive impact on our community and beyond.

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Coming Up Next

The gospel is 'Good News' for anyone who hears it. God sent Jesus into this world that even in the darkest of times we can have hope. Between now and Easter we are going to explore inspiring Bible stories of people who found hope when life was hard.

Good News
For
The People

Thoughts for The Day (Weekly Digest)

Monday Feb 22: Norman Smith

The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant. “Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, “‘From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise?’” And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night. Matthew 21: 14 – 17

Jesus taught, performed miracles, and lived the very lifestyle that was prophesied for the Messiah. For 3 years his public ministry clearly demonstrated he was the one prophesied. Yet for every person who proclaimed him Messiah (even children) there were others who denied it. They seem to have come from groups who held some kind of power/influence and for whom Jesus was a threat to their position. Whether you were a Pharisee or Sadducee, Herodian or Chief Priest the more invested you were in existing power structures the more Jesus seemed a threat.

We should always be open to

questioning if we are so invested in something we miss Jesus. That can be church or work or whatever.

Prayer: Father you tell us to keep our eyes on Jesus. Help me to hold onto things about my lightly but Jesus tightly; not the other way round.

Action: Think about all the way you exercise power/influence on others. Where is Jesus in that?

Tuesday Feb 23: Mary Macleod Rivett

Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, “May you never bear fruit again!” Immediately the tree withered. Matthew 21: 18 – 19

This is an odd one, isn't it? If you've ever grown a fig tree, you'll realise that it always has fruit on it – figs take two years to ripen, and they're not as seasonal as other fruit trees, so it's very unusual for a fig tree not to have fruit. But why should Jesus curse it for something that wasn't its fault – it's a tree! The story doesn't make much sense until you realise that in the Old Testament, the fig tree was used as a representation of wealth and security, a symbol for the prosperity and

happiness of Israel. Jesus is using the tree as a prophecy of the future of Jerusalem, whose leaders had been afraid of change and disruption and had not believed in him; its wealth and security would be lost for this lack of faith.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to trust in you and your work in my life. Show me the ways in which I can respond faithfully to you and help me not to fear and resist the changes you may bring to my circumstances. Amen

Action: look at how things have changed for you over the last year. Are there changes that you have found hard to accept? Bring them to God in prayer and ask for his courage and grace to sustain you.

Wednesday Feb 24: David Moodie

When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked. Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." Matthew 21: 20 – 22

Throwing mountains into the sea, quite the bold claim! But there's more going on here. As he spoke those

words Jesus was standing beside the Temple Mountain, the place where God and humanity were connected. So, when he said, 'with faith you can throw this mountain into the sea', Jesus likely wasn't meaning literal earthworks, but instead pointing towards what he was going to do. Jesus was going to become the new bridge between God and humanity. After his work was complete there wouldn't be a need for a physical temple, God would make his temple in our hearts.

That is why we can always approach God in prayer, no matter where we are. Because Jesus is our bridge to God, a connection that we can always rely on. We don't need to go to a temple because Jesus is always here with us.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you that you are our bridge to God. Help me to trust in you and always reach out in prayer, both in times of need and times of plenty. Let me never take for granted that you are always with me.

Action: Take a few extra moments throughout the day to pray. It doesn't need to be complicated, just spend some moments appreciating that God is with us.

Thursday Feb 25: Sarah Smith

Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief

priests and the elders of the people came to him. “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you this authority?”
Matthew 21: 23

A phrase many parents probably know and have used is “because I said so.” Children are told to listen and follow what their parents said because they said so. Parents haven’t done any training, taken any courses, or gotten a degree for being a parent, but they have authority as a parent. Their authority comes from the love they have for their children. Jesus comes in and teaches out of his love for the people. It is a total shift of where people get their authority from, love instead of fear or anger.

Prayer: Loving God, your love for us is more than we can ever imagine. Thank you for teaching us what love is, and what it means to love others as you have loved us. Help us to continue practicing this love, especially when it is challenging.
Amen.

Action: Practice living your life out of love.

Friday Feb 26: Mary Macleod Rivett
Jesus replied, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven,

or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin’—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.” Then he said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”
Matthew 21: 24 – 27

This is a sad passage, isn’t it? Jesus offered the Pharisees an opportunity when he asked this question about John – the Lord was asking the Pharisees to be honest about what they really thought, to enter into discussion and conversation with him. ‘Who do you think told John to baptise people?’ he asked, knowing this would lead to a discussion about the events of John’s ministry and naturally to Jesus’ ministry. But they were too frightened of everyone else to say that John was not from God, and too frightened of each other to say that they thought John was from God. They lost that chance for an honest talk with the Son of God, as we can lose the chance of healing and growth when we are afraid to be honest with God.

Prayer: Lord, help me not to be afraid of others and what they will think, and help me not to be afraid of you.

Show me how to reach out openly to you, to bring you my belief and my disbelief. I offer you my fears and my lack of faith, my anxiety and my anger, knowing that when I am honest with you, you will help and heal me, and lead me as I grow. Amen

Action: choose a thing about life that you are angry or confused about, or that you hate to admit, and pray about it once a day for a week. If this helps, do the same next week with another issue.

Saturday Feb 27: Caroline Lockerbie

“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’ “‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. “Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go. “Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered. Matthew 21: 28 – 31a

Oh please, just give me a test tube or a petri dish. These philosophical questions that Jesus poses just make my head hurt. But I will try to answer his question ‘What do you think?’ As a black and white thinker, I would have to ask, ‘what is the goal of the father’s directive?’ In the parable we interpret the father to be God and the vineyard to be God’s Kingdom. So, if we are looking at the fundamental will of God

as being ‘honesty’, then I would have to say both sons failed. And that really would be my initial reaction to the sons’ actions. However, in answering his own question, Jesus suggests that the goal was inclusion in the Kingdom and perhaps the ordering of the queue at the entrance gate. Jesus commends those spectators who cheered for the first son, the one who changed his mind and went to work in the vineyard. He then pointed out to his listeners that while they might have considered themselves to be the more righteous, it was the people who changed their minds and thus their actions toward God who would be at the head of the queue.

What really stand out for me are the last nine words ‘going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.’ This tells me that the queue might be long, even slow, but everyone who wants in is going to make it. (To be clear: that is not a license to abuse God’s law.) There are no closure times. And given that, I don’t care where I am in the queue. I am just thrilled to be getting to the Kingdom, but I certainly don’t need to be first in. I truly enjoy the benefits of Kingdom life in this earthly realm and am happy to hold back for others who might need the heavenly benefits more than I do.

Prayer: God, you sometimes give us frustrating challenges and Jesus asks some awkward questions. Help us to

trust you as we search for the answers in our lives. Give us courage, give us a heart for justice and then let your love shine through us.

Action: Energized by the comfort and security of knowing you are in the queue for the Kingdom reach out in love to be the earthly Kingdom for the needy of body, mind or spirit.

Sunday Feb 28: Ian Moir

Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him. Matthew 21: 31b – 32

The startling thing in this passage is that it was the tax – gatherers and prostitutes who believed John the Baptist’s message, not the religious leaders. Christians who can express their faith in fine words are often admired and what they say is helpful, but in the end of the day it is our actions that mark us out!

Prayer: Living God, I find it difficult to speak about what I believe, but I do love helping people. Thank you for valuing my actions and help me to be even more generous with my time and talents.

Action: Set yourself a goal of at least one good deed a day. A phone call counts!

Our Church Values

Everything we do is rooted in **JESUS CHRIST**

EQUALITY is based on who you are and not what you have

EVERYONE is valued and everyone has gifts that can be offered to God

COMMUNITY brings with it respect across the generations and cultures

Acts of Random Kindness

Faith in Jesus works itself out through how we live amongst others. How we practice faith is the single most powerful way we have of demonstrating faith to others. What will you do this week for someone else? Phone / Go Walking Together / Get Messages...

Act of
Random
Kindness

"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

Lent Prayer Garden

Sometimes it is only when you lose something you begin to realise what a gift

it was in the first place. We cannot right now worship in the building but we can use the grounds to help us worship. They are a gift that we should make the most of.

During Lent you will find the Boswall Parkway gate unlocked with inspirational messages on the trees along with a wooden cross in the grounds where you are encouraged to go and pray. As you go for your daily walk, why not pop into the garden to encourage yourself?

Please observe social distancing as you make use of the Prayer Garden.

Want to meet other people and explore faith together? If yes then this is for you. We have set up small groups that will meet regularly for around 40 mins. If you are interested in joining please contact Sarah. Her email is on the back page.



Cook-Inn' food bank is operating in our area. Up to once-weekly fresh and / or packaged food parcels, to be collected; or delivered to those of low mobility. Special diets catered for on request. They can be texted on; 07531 436 389, or messaged from the 'Cook-Inn SE Scotland' facebook page. They are a not-for-profit organisation, and receive no government funding. This allows them to give out fresh food as well as packaged or tinned. It also allows us to give food bags to someone as often as they need - weekly is the norm. If you know of someone who could use help please dial the number shown above.

Community Groups have banded together to see people in need are looked after.

If you need help please phone the number opposite.

COVID-19 Foodshare Group Support and Help available in North Edinburgh

(Muirhouse/Salvesen/Pilton/Granton/Drylaw/Telford)





Due to current Government regulations all church activity is being held online. Keep checking the website for details.

PRAY IT FORWARD

We want everyone in the church family to be prayed for. Are you willing to spend some time at home praying for other people? If you are you will be given a list of people to pray for on a weekly basis. You may know them, you may not, they will all be part of our church family. Let Norman or one of the Ministry team know if you will be part of the prayer team.

Pray Together **Thu 11th Mar** **7pm, Zoom**

Join with others online as we spend an hour praying together for those we know and the world we live in. You will need a pen, some paper and a candle.

For more info about anything in the Bulletin, snap the QR code or visit



grantonchurch.org.uk

If you have access to the internet, check www.grantonchurch.org.uk and click SUBSCRIBE to get Thought for the Day delivered every day.

If you don't have access to the internet and would like to receive this by post, or want to update your contact details please call Norman on 0131 551 2159

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