



KNOX CHURCH, DUNEDIN

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

Presbyterian Support Sunday

10am – Sunday 1 November 2020

Music to prepare us for worship “*Pavane*” (pour une infante defunte) Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) arr. Bryan Hesford; “*Abide with me*” Noel Rawsthorne (1928- 2019); “*Nimrod*” Edward William Elgar (1857- 1934)

Welcome

Music of approach “*And I saw a new heaven*” text from Revelation, music K Knudson (2015)
Carolyn Schmid/organ

Call to worship

Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou. May God be with you.

Ma Ihowa koe e manaaki. May God bless you.

When we stand at the edge of fear and worry,

God invites us to step into the waters of faith and trust.

When we stand at the edge of the world's pain and need,

Jesus invites us to step into the land of humble service.

When we stand at the edge of our hunger and thirst:

the Spirit invites us to share at the Table of grace.

Hymn

(tune Seasons of Spirit) - Fay White

1 Come to the banquet, there's a place for you.

Though you maybe have no money,
though you maybe feel unworthy, in
your strength or in your weakness you
are welcome, come.

2 Come to the banquet, there's a place for you.

See, you are an honoured guest,
from the constant serving you may
rest; so sit you down, be fed and
blessed for you are welcome, come.

3 Come to the banquet, there's a place for you.

Woman, wise one, mother, maiden,
see your plate with food is laden
and your place is set and waiting. You
are welcome, come.

4 Come to the banquet, there's a place for you.

Whether, you've been lost or faithful,
whenever you've been wise or
wasteful, here's a place of rest and
grace, and you are welcome, come.

5 Come to the banquet, there's a place
for you.
Here is one who runs to meet you,
loving arms stretched out to greet you.
Do not let your fear defeat you. You
are welcome, come.

Prayer, assurance of forgiveness

E te whanau, in Christ we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

Kia tau te rangimarie o te Karaiti ki runga i a koutou. May the peace of Christ be with
you always. **And also with you.**

Music "*Agnus Dei- Lamb of God, grant us peace*" Karl Jenkins (b. 1944) Rosemary Tarbotton/conductor

Children

Hymn

(tune Neighbour) AA59 - Colin Gibson

He came singing *love*
and he lived singing *love*:
he died singing *love*.
He arose in silence.
For the *love* to go on
we must make it our song:
you and I be the singers

He came singing *faith*

He came singing *hope*

He came singing *peace*

Readings – Listen for God's Word to us ...

Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to an inhabited town; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them. Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress; he led them by a straight way, until they reached an inhabited town. Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things. He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into thirsty ground, a fruitful land into a salty waste, because of the wickedness of its inhabitants. He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water. And there he lets the hungry live, and they establish a town to live in; they sow fields, and plant vineyards, and get a fruitful yield.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church **Thanks be to God**

Matthew 23:1-12

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father--the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ Praise to Christ the Word

Reflection 'Being with'

Let me begin by speaking about Presbyterian Support Otago of which I am a Board member.

I want to thank many of you for your financial support. We have many causes that seek our giving and it's not easy choosing. By your giving, you provide services like a listening ear and helpful skills to families working through challenges. Many of us know how tough those challenges can be and have been grateful for the help we have received, so it is good to pass it on. Thank you too to those who week by week, put non-perishable gifts in the boxes at the back of the church for the foodbank. Recently when I took in our gifts, I noticed two people walking out with bags of basic necessities. How hard it is when money runs out. After COVID that need has grown. And thank you to those people who are part of the buddy programme. I know a young couple in Central Otago who regularly host a young person, just to be with that person, and in the process they learn about the challenges families face. Their compassion grows with understanding as they become involved in a person's life. And thank you to those who purchase plants at Youth Grow. We have found it a great source of plants for our garden. And there is much more. There is material at the back of the church and if you would like to know more, I am always available.

Now I turn to the theme of service, evident in the reading today. This unusual year we learned to live in a bubble, to live exclusively with people with whom we normally lived or who came to be with us. For some of us it was a gift, for some of us it was a challenge, and perhaps for most of us it was a mix of the two. During a pandemic, living in a bubble makes sense. Outside a pandemic, bubbles are problems. Feeling isolated is a major ailment in our society. Whereas connectedness is a major contributor to health, social ills grow when people feel unconnected. Now in a way, we live in bubbles all the time. We all have a limited range of contacts. We all spend more time with some people than others. And over time those connections develop a pattern.

In an unequal society, for example, the gaps between socio-economic groups can become chasms, societies divide, communities fracture, the glue that holds us together dissolves. Then bigger problems arise. Such gaps thwart us growing into full human beings and becoming a flourishing community. For a while I served a central city church in a provincial city. By its history and its place in the city, that church reached across the city's divides, and so as its minister did I. I became conscious that there were circles of people. In one circle I would keep coming across much the same people again and again. Then in another circle I came across another group of people, again and again. And then in another circle, another group of people, again and again. But I noticed that few people went between the circles. People stayed within their circle and had little experience of living outside it.

Many of our faith stories are about achieving a flourishing life, the danger of bubbles and the importance of bridging divides. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, a person reaches across the chasm of a long history of animosity. In the parable of the Lazarus and the rich man, the chasm became unbridgeable. The gospel is about bridging chasms. How do we be part of its movement?

I want to use ideas from Sam Wells, vicar of St Martins in the Fields in Trafalgar Square in London. St Martin's is confronted by chasms. It is known for its heritage of music. And on its doorstep sleep people

who are homeless. Wells says that the most important word for our time and the most important theological word of our time is the word “with”. Let’s explore that.

Wells asks us to imagine someone who is homeless. Some people will see before them a personal tragedy, perhaps someone has so struggled with an addiction that they have used up their money. Some people will imagine they have come late to a crime-scene, perhaps the person is the victim of abuse, so that living outside is preferable to being unsafe inside. Some people will see a public policy failure, perhaps a person’s skills are no longer needed, or no low-cost housing is available. Some people will see a person making a choice, someone choosing to live without a home as a lifestyle choice. Some people might even blame the person for the situation in which they find themselves. Beyond the lens we use, beyond the framework we bring, is the person themselves with their own story. Wells invites us to avoid squeezing their story into our view of the world or our approach to homelessness. We’re invited instead to treat the person as their own person with their own story.

Wells says there are four ways we can respond to seeing someone homeless. We might say ... “We need to get people off the streets into housing, employment, a profitable use of their time.” So we may be energised to join the board of a night shelter or to take the person some food or provide some clothing. If we have professional skills, we might seek to help them professionally. Wells calls that approach, working for, intervening to act on behalf of a person who is homeless. The second option is to speak to the person who is homeless, to explore the reasons they are homeless, to help them know what resources are available for them. Wells calls this approach, working with, an action that is taken in partnership with the person who is homeless. The third option is simply to sit down beside the person who is homeless, to pass the time of day with them – share first names, talk about where they are from, ask what it is like to spend a day or night outside. Wells calls this approach, being with someone, having a genuine encounter. The fourth option is to feel rising anger about the fact that there are homeless people at all, to discourage people from speaking about “the homeless”, to critique assumptions about mental health or any stereotype we might use. Wells calls this approach, being for someone, not encountering the person but acting for them.

There is a place for each approach. Each has its value. One in particular names a primary way God is, being with. Emmanuel – God with us. God being with us and we being with people is a core way of our being that informs and animates the other dimensions of how we engage. In a world of isolation and dislocation and disconnection, being with is a call on us as a congregation. That is a challenge to any central city congregation with our diversity and with opportunity on our doorstep. I wonder how we can partner Presbyterian Support in a way that helps us to be with others. Support might attend to all the aspects I have named, but none can replace the call on us to be with others.

We weren’t made to live in bubbles, in individual bubbles, in socio-economic bubbles, in church bubbles. The impulse of the gospel is to bridge chasms, to cross divides, to reach across, to be with another. There is an invitation here.

Hymn

(tune The Servant King) CH4 374 - Graham Kendrick

1 From heaven you came, helpless babe,
entered our world, your glory veiled;
not to be served, but to serve,
and give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
who calls us now to follow him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.*

2 There in the garden of tears,
my heavy load he chose to bear;
his heart with sorrow was torn,
‘Yet not my will but yours,’ he said.

[Refrain]

3 Come see his hands and his feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.

[Refrain]

4 So let us learn how to serve,
and in our lives enthrone him;
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.

[Refrain]

Prayer for others and the Lord's Prayer

Anglican prayer book

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the
glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tōu Ingoa.
Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.
Kia meatia tāu e pai ai
ki runga ki te whenua,
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.
Hōmai ki a mātou āiane
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.
Murua ō mātou hara,
Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i ō te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.
Āua hoki mātou e kaweā kia
whakawaia;
Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:
Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha,
me te korōria, Āke āke āke. Āmine.

Introducing the journey to Advent and Christmas

The offertory prayer

Hymn

1 Rejoice in God's saints, today and all
days!
A world without saints forgets how to
praise.
Their faith in acquiring the habit of
prayer,
their depth of adoring, Lord, help us to
share.

(tune Laudate Dominum) CH4 742 - Frederick Pratt Green

2 Some march with events to turn
them God's way;
some need to withdraw, the better to
pray;
some carry the gospel through fire and
through flood:
our world is their parish: their purpose
is God.

3 Rejoice in those saints, unpraised and unknown,
who bear someone's cross, or shoulder their own:
they share our complaining, our comforts, our cares:
what patience in caring, what courage, is theirs!

4 Rejoice in God's saints, today and all days!
A world without saints forgets how to praise.
In loving, in living, they prove it is true:
the way of self-giving, Lord, leads us to you.

Dedication of offering – *Please place your offerings in the offering bags held out for you at the door as you leave. Please do this as soon as you are able.*

Blessing

Music for our leaving “*Adagio*”

Tomaso Albinoni (1671-1751)

Serving

Minister – Kerry Enright
Associate Minister - Jordan Redding
Organist and Choir Director – Karen Knudson
Reader – Linda Holloway
Prayer for others – Peter Wishart
Welcoming team – David Richardson’s team
Counting team – Howard Smith’s team

In relation to your monetary offering, you may:

- *Make regular automatic payments (which are tax deductible) - contact Helen Thew at plannedgiving@knoxchurch.net*
- *Give online to the Church’s bank account at 03 0903 0016425 00 - our charity number for tax rebate purposes is #CC52318*
- *Give at the conclusion of the service.*