



ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

12th October, 2020

Sunday Sermon: Harvest Firstfruits

Appropriately on Harvest Sunday, this sermon was based on the OT Feast of Firstfruits as recorded in Deuteronomy 26: 1 – 11, and its echoes in the New Testament.

The practice of bringing the firstfruits from the harvest was a way of **acknowledging** what God had done for them in the past in redeeming them from bondage in Egypt and sustaining them on their pilgrimage to the Promised Land. It also **anticipated** what lay ahead in His continuing presence and support for them as they became established in Canaan.

Three incidents in the NT demonstrate the spiritual significance of that concept of 'firstfruits' – clear evidence of growth and its offering to God in worship - as a spiritual principle.

James (1: 8) highlights the fact the through His word God gives the **power** to bring new life: life that Jesus describes in John's Gospel as being born again with full development to come. Romans (8: 23) stresses the fact that God's **presence** gives strength for that life, both at its inception and throughout its existence. Corinthians (1: 15: 20) speaks of the resurrection as the **promise** of God concerning eternal life, both now and forever. Firstfruits is the product from a seed which has 'died' in the soil before bursting into life.

But, to be effective, that seed – Jesus, the Word of God, crucified and resurrected - needs to be definitely **received** and effectively **nurtured** by each one of us before we can offer our firstfruits.

Thank you

To Ian and Margaret Baird and the other helpers, including the Thursday morning gardeners, who work so hard behind the scenes to ensure that the church premises are kept in good order and compliant with all the regulations. Thanks, too to all who do the organising and look after what is happening. That the church is open for public worship and that we can share and participate in meetings through Zoom (thanks to David Jack for managing all this) and face to face is greatly appreciated.

Services

Over the next two weeks our services will be taken by Simon Turner of Kilsyth Community Church this Sunday and by Gordon Thomson of the Faith Mission on the 25th. We remember both of them in prayer.

The prayer meetings will be led by the Elders and the Bible Study by Howel. Though not the same as face-to-face meetings, these Zoom sessions are very helpful. Do join us if you can but using the old access details of:

Prayer Meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81920229424?pwd=ZjIwYjZpMzhKYS8rY01tU29sd0tkUT09>; Meeting ID: 819 2022 9424;

Password: 047533; Telephone access: 0131 460 1196.

Bible Study:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89984453732?pwd=MEV5MFhITGI RazJYbFh6WjZ5REZ6dz09> Meeting ID: 899 8445 3732;

Password: 005502; Telephone access: 0131 460 1196.

People

Please pray for Jean Malkin as she goes in to the Jubilee Hospital on Wednesday for a long-awaited knee operation. Margaret Cowan is now back in Mugdock Care Home after her spell in QEUH; and Jack Harvey is in Buchanan House. Remember George and Christine, not forgetting all those Care Workers, including our own Gordon Craig and Carol Macleod, who help to provide the care that is so much appreciated. Also those on our regular prayer lists; and new situations arising with Jack Adair, Bethany and Andrew Macleod seeking employment and direction and Mary Linton with a broken arm from a fall.

Book Recommendation

The essence of the reception of the revealed life of God in Jesus and its living out is contained in the 17th Century classic: *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* by Henry Scougal now brought out in modern English by Paul Lamb and available from Amazon. Worth reading.

Bible Study

Last Thursday's Bible Study was taken up with the Gospel of John where God's thoughts toward a fallen world are expressed in one Word: Jesus. All God dwells in Him and He can be received

(believed) to bring us eternal life which can be increasingly appreciated. We continue with John's Gospel again this week looking this time at the structure. Individual contributions from the 'homework' each week have been excellent and very encouraging. This week's 'homework' is to think of the way the material is structured and what we can learn about the progression as presented by John. Join us: it can be fun - and helpful.

Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal

At yesterday's Harvest Services there was a focus on Blythswood Care – our Mission cause of the Month - and the important relief work they fulfil across Europe and beyond. Despite the Covid restrictions in place the annual Shoe Box Appeal will still be taking place this year when more than ever the need for support is very considerable given the current living conditions in the countries Blythswood supports. Leaflets are available, with modified instructions and new guidance which will now apply. We are asking that all boxes are brought to the Church by Sunday 1st November. If you are unable to personally come to Church then we can arrange for the box to be uplifted.

Finally

The recent furore surrounding Margaret Ferrier MP, is a reminder to one and all of the importance of example when we are trying to convey a message. She has been turned on, by even her own colleagues as they recognise there can be no justification of an elected member choosing to travel when knowingly infected with Covid-19. Whilst there is a lot to learn from this incident regarding public life, there is a greater lesson to us all about the power of example. Why should anyone believe a message if the person sharing it doesn't live by it? What a challenge to every Christian, but also what a reminder that in a day when lives are in turmoil, we can be examples by showing how faith in Christ can conquer our natural fear.