



## ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

### FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

11<sup>th</sup> January, 2021

#### Sunday Sermon: Christ before Bethlehem

Following on from Paul's statement that the only foundation for the church – of our life - is Christ Jesus, John begins a new series on the life of Christ.

While the popular view is that Jesus' life began with his miraculous birth in Bethlehem, the Bible clearly shows that He was much more than a mere man: he was – and is – eternal and divine.

He existed before he was promised. He was with the Father before time began. As Micah, referring to the pending birth at Bethlehem was to say: *his origin is from of old*. His home was in heaven.

Not only was he pre-existent in heaven but, as the second person of the Trinity, he shared in God's purpose and plans for the world and humanity. He was involved in creation, for "*all things were made by Him*".

Yet, from that glorious pre-existence he "*entered our world, his glory veiled*". He came for a purpose. He came to make redemption possible. He "*left the gaze of angels for the anguish of the cross*" – all to save us.

Why does this matter? It helps us to understand the nature of our salvation and who the Saviour is. It is not casually following a hero, a friend, or a mentor, but a realisation that the Son of God left his eternal throne for our sinful world to die for our sins and to reconcile us to God. That is the Jesus who is the only foundation. A full realisation of that will govern how we worship and the extent of our total commitment.

#### Church Closure

The current government restrictions required to minimise the spread of the corona virus include the instruction that all places of worship are to be closed at least until the end of January. As we will be complying with the instruction, there will not be any services held in Allander Church for at least the next four weeks. However, John Macleod will still record a sermon each week which will be available on Facebook and the church website.

#### Zoom Participation

With restrictions now re-imposed, our meeting in church on Sundays is suspended until further notice. That makes meeting on Zoom even more important and beneficial in enabling many to see each other, interact, and share together in prayer and Bible Study. If you haven't done so yet, do think of joining in either on Tuesdays at 8 pm, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am to 10 30am or on Thursday evenings at 7 30pm.

Computer/Tablet/smartphone access is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81920229424?pwd=ZjlwcWJpMzhKYS8rY01tU29sd0tkUT09; Meeting ID: ID: 819 2022 9424; Passcode: 047533>. You can also join by ordinary telephone by contacting 0131 460 1196, citing the Meeting ID and Passcode listed above.

#### Bible Study

The Zoom Bible Studies will, DV, resume on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 at 7 30 pm starting with a look at Genesis. By way of preparation, think of key verses or

incidents in the book to share these together.

### **FM Week of Prayer**

The Faith Mission Week of Prayer starts today and will continue until Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> January. We are encouraged to set time aside each day. Prayer topics are available on request.

### **Elders**

Please pray for the Elders as they meet next Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January to continue oversight and guidance in these challenging times. Their diligence and hard work is greatly appreciated.

### **Mission of the Month: Platform 67**

Platform 67 is a networking organisation seeking to encourage, inform, and support gospel outreach through partnership across the world in accordance with the Psalm 67 declaration: *"Make God's ways known on earth, his salvation among all nations"*. Martin Dudgeon would normally visit us at this time of year to bring us up to date with developments.

### **Weekly Giving**

With no physical attendance at meetings, contributions to the Mission of the Month or to the upkeep of the work of the church can be made through the bank,

sending a cheque to David Jack or by bank transfer. Contact David Jack for details.

### **Visitors**

It has been a pleasure to welcome Brinton and Hannah Howerton to Allander over the Christmas period. Hannah (Milne) attended Allander's Youth Fellowship some 20 odd years ago. They have now returned to Dubai where they work with IFES reaching out to students.

### **Blythswood**

Blythswood have sent us an extra thank you re the shoeboxes and gifts: *It is our privilege to be able to thank you on behalf of Blythswood Care, but thank you also on behalf of those you might never meet, yet whose lives have been made better thanks than your kindness and care.*

### **People**

In addition to those listed last week (and any who were inadvertently omitted from that list) some of our people have special prayer needs: Jean Donnelly had a cataract operation on Thursday and Ann Lyle on Friday; David Jack's family in Aberdeen is affected by the virus; and Janice Allan's brother passed away. However, Flora's consultation showed that the kneecap is healing – a real answer to prayer for which we praise God.

### **Finally**

Usually when I look out on the back garden I am reminded of something that needs attended to; either to be put away, repaired or cut back, so it was a pleasant surprise on Thursday morning to look out and see a beautiful covering of snow that manages to make everything look so perfect. It is a great reminder of the verse in Isaiah 1 that tells us that although our sins are like scarlet they shall be made white as snow. Amazingly the gospel teaches us that God does not just cover our ugliness with a beautiful blanket of whiteness, He actually takes all the ugliness away and makes us pure in HIM. 1 John 1 v 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.