

**Ardrossan and Saltcoats Kirkgate Parish Church, Service Recording
21st June 2020. (Brian Murray Locum Minister)** Please excuse the grammar,
punctuation and spelling, these transcripts are usually never seen by the congregation!

Opening Voluntary "La Califfa" by Ennio Morricone

Hello and welcome to this recording for the 21st June 2020, The third Sunday after Pentecost. So again a very warm welcome whether you are visiting or are a regular listener on the web site, phone-in, or recorded memory sticks I do hope, as always, that this wee recording cheers you up a bit in this time of continued lock down and shielding and you feel blessed as we worship together. O and Happy Father's Day gents, maybe we will get a chance to celebrate a little today with the family.

Now the opening voluntary Stuart played today was La Califfa by Ennio Morricone

Let me announce once more the up and coming new broadcast for the 5th July at 7pm. Now I hope you noticed the mistake last week I said the 7th, but Sunday is the 5th of July. Remember the little paragraph I read well here it is again for those who missed it.

"Now that we've got the hang of putting together these weekly services, we've decided to branch out and create a new, initially monthly, podcast called Kirkgate: By Request. This will be an additional audio-only feature with favourite hymns and organ music. So, to all our listeners and members, we're looking for requests or dedications for your favourite hymns, or maybe just a short message to your friends. Please send any messages by email to a new email address - requests@kirkgatechurch.org.uk , or contact either Stuart or Brian by phone or by traditional mail - details are in the Kirkgate Messenger. The first episode will be broadcast on Sunday 5th July at 7pm. Any content to be included within that programme will need to be with us the week beforehand - ie no later than Sunday 28th June, so please get in touch and help us make this a great success. "

The recording should be accessible on the phone as well as the web site and Stuart is looking into that now. So look out for that recording to come. I'll mention it again next Sunday.

Tomorrow is Windrush Day the 22st of June and we can weave that into the sermon later as we look at the mission for the Cristian and the opposition, persecution and discrimination we might all face for many reasons. Cheery thought today then I hear you say.

But first, let us begin our worship today as always with a short few seconds of silence just to calm our hearts and prepare for worship in the Spirit where ever we are at the moment. Whatever room you are sitting in with tea or coffee and toast in hand. Just relax for a few minutes in the presence of Jesus.

Our call to worship is inspired from Psalm 84 verses 9 and 10

**All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.
For you are great and do marvellous deeds;
you alone are God.**

our opening praise today is taken from CH4 number 561 Blessed Assurance

CH4 561 Blessed Assurance

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
This is my story.....

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.
This is my story....

Frances (Fanny) Jane Crosby (1820–1915)
Reproduced from CH4 CD-ROM edition, number 561

Shall we join our hearts and minds in prayer - let us pray

Loving Lord God, this week we saw and heard the power of Your nature with the thunder and lightening crashing around us, the rain deluging in the street and we marvelled at the power of all You have made. Then the sun by day and the stars and the moon by night.

How glorious is Your creation in all its splendour and awesome power.

We bow in the presence of such a Father God who reigns from Heaven.

Father we are dust and water yet we know we are created in Your perfect image. Forgive us Lord God for the times we fail to live up to that thought.

Our image is not perfect, but ugly as sin breaks through and we speak curses instead of truths in love.

Help us once more to seek the ways of our Lord and Saviour Jesus in living in Your Kingdom.

Touch our hearts and minds by Your Spirit and teach us Kingdom living.

Father here us now as we pray that prayers Jesus taught when we say together

Our Father who art in Heaven

Hallowed be Thy name,

Thy Kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our debts

as we forgive our debtors,

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

For Thine is the Kingdom the power and the glory

for ever

Amen.

Our Scripture Readings

Let us hear the word of the Lord taken from the NIV translation.

Matthew 10:24-39 New International Version (NIV)

24 “The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. **25** It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

26 “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care.^[a] 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

34 “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn

“‘a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law —
36

a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’^[b]

37 “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Footnotes:

a Matthew 10:29 Or *will*; or *knowledge*

b Matthew 10:36 Micah 7:6

Let us sing once more

CH4 97 O God You search me and you know me.

O God, you search me and you know me.
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down you are before me :
ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
and with love everlasting you besiege me :
in every moment of life or death, you are.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
you have known its meaning through and through.
You are with me beyond my understanding :
God of my present, my past and future, too.

Although your Spirit is upon me,
still I search for shelter from your light.
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you :
even the darkness is radiant in your sight.

For you created me and shaped me,
gave me life within my mother's womb.
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you :
safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

from Psalm 139

Bernadette Farrell (b.1957)

Reproduced from CH4 CD-ROM edition, number 97

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Your eye is on the sparrow

<https://youtu.be/XQkO5tO0GK8> (link to the song)

Your Eye Is On The Sparrow
And Your Hand, It Comforts Me
From The Ends Of The Earth
To The Depth Of My Heart
Let Your Mercy And Strength Be Seen

You Call Me To Your Purpose
As Angels Understand
For Your Glory, May You Draw All Men
As Your Love And Grace Demand

And I Will Run To You
To Your Words Of Truth
Not By Might, Not By Power
But By The Spirit Of God
Yes, I Will Run The Race
Till I See Your Face
Oh Let Me Live In The Glory
Oh Let Me Live In The Glory
Oh Let Me Live In The Glory Of Your Grace

Sermon

Your eye is on the Sparrow and Your hand it comforts me,
From the ends of the earth to the depth of my heart
Let Your mercy and strength be seen.

A beautiful song that reflects this passage of the care and love of God for us above the humble sparrow. My reflection today is concerning HOME TRUTHS.

Our passage today begins with Jesus telling His disciples some home truths. There will be no secrets for they will all be exposed; the Gospel message will be told, shouted from the roof tops, as Jesus commanded; and as we do so we are loved and cared for for we are so dear to God that He knows everything about us. Every hair on our heads is known and every human is to be valued highly.

The passage works with hyperbole as is the case in many of the Bible stories, exaggerated ways of telling to make us sit up and listen. We take these passages figuratively not necessarily literally. Does God know at any moment ever hair on the human head. We lose something like 80 hairs a day so I believe, maybe more for me - or do we read it as God knows us better than we know ourselves. And that should be a comfort to us. For maybe we have been turned aside from the precipice a number of times by God's merciful hand in our lives.

Humanity is invited to make stark choices in life - follow Jesus and be saved or go the path of destruction. We pick up on the story after Jesus has been instructing the 12 disciples in Chapter 10 verses 1 - 23 on their mission assignment to go into the neighbouring towns and villages and spread the good news of the Kingdom. And they are warned by Jesus of the rejection, discrimination and perhaps persecution they might face.

Let me ask you Have you been persecuted because of your faith? Have you been discriminated against because of your gender, your apparent social status, your skin colour or political views? Who was jealous of your abilities at school or at work or even in the church.

Who fell out with you over trivial matters in the family or bigger matters of faith? Familial strife can and some times does arise because parents or siblings oppose Christianity. Maybe outright violent persecution is not so much heard of in our Western Society, but maybe more among the ethnic communities and families of other religions. To profess to being Christian might carry the death sentence or at the very least being exiled from the family in some places.

Jesus knows these things and told us they might happen. The challenging news is that we can suffer life's tragedies just the same as those outside the faith. Being Christian is not the panacea of all ills. We still suffer physical hardships mental unease and anxieties due to illness or the way we are being treated. Of course the great many of us will not lose our lives because of who we are and what we represent, but the threat always remains and that is why we need to pray often. That is why we must believe on the Holy Spirit to come to us in power and wisdom - to bolster our courage, to become fearless for Jesus.

Brother's and sisters in Christ, we live as lambs in a society of wolves.

Matt 10:16 NIV

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Such a strange saying is it not. Move warily but look totally innocent.

Yet we hear in that beautiful melody and song - the Lord's hand looks after the smallest of beings. 'Your eye is on the sparrow - and Your hand it comforts me.' and our God **is** a comfort to us, for He sees the struggles we have here on earth and He blesses us and has prepared for a purpose for us now and a place with many

treasures in heaven later. When we place our faith in Jesus we are accepted into the Kingdom of God.

St. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth,

2 Corinthians 6 verses 4-10 NIV

.....as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships, and calamities; 5in beatings, imprisonments, and riots; in labor, sleepless nights, and hunger; 6in purity, knowledge, patience, and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; 7in truthful speech and in the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; 8through glory and dishonour, slander and praise; viewed as imposters, yet genuine; 9as unknown, yet well-known; dying, and yet we live on; punished, yet not killed; 10sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

O how we enjoy the status of a prince or princess, the heir to the throne with Jesus,

“ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:17 ESV

- and we are loved as perfectly and wonderfully made in the Father God’s image. We are slightly below the status of the angels, yet we have more access to God in Heaven in our new abode with Christ everlasting.

What welcome we will have, what rejoicing we will encounter for our faithful worship and service when we stand in glory.

Revelation 7:9 ESV

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

In the verse from Revelation John saw all nations worshipping together more numerous than the eye could see or count.

Oh that such a thing could be witnessed here on earth. All nations, peoples, all humanity working and living as equals.

As Burns wrote:

Then let us pray that come it may,
(As come it will for a' that,)
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That Man to Man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

But we know that might never be the case until the very end of the age. We need look no further than the events in the news recently and the protest marches seeking an end to racial discrimination, Black lives Matter. Tomorrow the 22nd is 'Windrush Day'.

A celebration of those diverse communities of Caribbean descent who a generation or two ago came to Britain after the war in 1948 by invitation to take up residence and find work here. The reality was somewhat different. Racial discrimination and lack of employment. And just recently the Windrush scandal where the Home Office wrongly detained and deported at least 83 people illegally. Now since 2018 there is celebration to mark the contribution they have made to the British life and economy. We call ourselves a diverse community where we seek to live together in harmony. The stark reality of inequality and racism can be seen across the world in every sphere.

Jesus makes it plain to Christians that we will find discrimination on the grounds of our faith in some quarters. Yet we are not to fear. Those who can kill the body hold no power over us. We should only fear God who can destroy both body and soul and if we proclaim Jesus Lord and Saviour and believe on Him then we will not be destroyed but have everlasting life.

for Jesus intercedes for us:

verses

32 "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. **33** But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

Friends none of us want to be persecuted, rejected or discriminated against on the ground of faith, but when it does raise its ugly head, God will take care of us. For Jesus makes the comparison between how God cares for the tiniest thing in creation like the sparrow, but we are much much more cared for by God. For the rewards far outweighs the trials and tribulations.

Isn't that wonderful good news that God holds us so dear. You see the sparrow will only fall by God's hand and he cares for them that they do not fall to the ground. Sparrows were a cheap poor mans offering at the temple. Not many pilgrims could bring a goat or a lamb. So sparrows were a very cheap alternative.

But sparrows are beautiful wee things. God must delight in them and he must delight in us even more. Through all the trials and tribulation we might face in life and in faith, God is with us reaching out to hearts and minds allowing us our wages, or the things we need supplied by those that respect us for the way we talk and act, for the integrity and circumspect lives we show to them. Then we might see the goodness of nature in our communities extended to encompass their need to seek Jesus for themselves knowing how rich in Spirit are we.

And what a message we are to proclaim. What we learn in the quiet of the Bible Study, what God reveals to us in the privacy of our time with Him is not to live in silence, but be proclaimed in a loud voice proclaiming Jesus the Saviour and Lord of all. Shouted from the roof tops.

Jesus the one who came to save humanity in the most mysterious of ways, dying on the cross, being raised to life and ascending to be with the Father from whence He came.

A simple message for all of us, the message to give that we need to say sorry to God for our sins, our selfishness, and ask Jesus into our hearts. Simple in word, perhaps more challenging to the souls of many. In our conversion and acceptance into the Kingdom of God, we can never be greater than the teacher who bade us come, but we can emanate the loving ways He taught us to live in hope and joy and peace.

Such wonder of knowing Jesus brings with it a challenge too. We are to be worthy of Him and that bears a cost. We are to love Him above everything and everyone near and dear for that is the price of discipleship. But that in itself will bring fulfilment and peace to us and give us the strength to love all those around us even more. The encouraging and most important verse for me is the last we read. Verse 39.

39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

It is laying down our life before Jesus, placing our trust in Him who died for us that we might live that we find solace in all life's challenges. When we try to live a selfish life we are lost to the joy and comfort of knowing Jesus, but when we lose our life, maybe not literally, but we lose all the earthly things we held dear, we may consider ourselves rich in faith and will be uplifted by our Saviour and rewarded in Heaven for our faithful obedience, even obedience to suffering for Christ.

So we remember that God carries us by His Spirit when we go in the name of Jesus the Lord and Saviour and when we are obedient to His command to go make disciples for Jesus, baptising them in the name of the Father Son and Holy Ghost, bringing them into the Kingdom of Grace.

Next time you see a wee sparrow, take a moment to think of God walking close beside you knowing He cares for you even more than these little birds. Find comfort in that no matter what discrimination and persecution we might face for who we are or what we believe in.

For in Christ we have the victory we just need to remember to celebrate it.
Amen

**Your Eye Is On The Sparrow
And Your Hand, It Comforts Me
From The Ends Of The Earth
To The Depth Of My Heart
Let Your Mercy And Grace Be Seen**

**You Call Me To Your Purpose
As Angels Understand
For Your Glory, May You Draw All Men
As Your Love And Grace Demand**

**And I Will Run To You
To Your Words Of Truth
Not By Might, Not By Power
But By The Spirit Of God
Yes, I Will Run The Race
Till I See Your Face
Oh Let Me Live In The Glory
Oh Let Me Live In The Glory
Oh Let Me Live In The Glory Of Your Grace**

Amen.

Shall we pray our prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession.

Loving Lord God, our world is writhing in labour pains, shaken because of the pandemic of the Corona Virus and now the Black lives matter protests. Father God, help this world to see that all lives matter, human animal and plant life. For all lives matter to You.

Lord touch hearts and minds this day that humanity might wake up to that principle. Lord God as You tore down the effrontery of the tower of Babel, we ask that You sweep away earthly kingdoms and strongholds of selfishness, corruption and hate. Help us to rebuild our world on the doctrine of love and tolerance, patience and forgiveness all displayed in our mentor and guide Jesus.

Gracious God our hearts tremble for our leaders, for those who need to face up to these challenges that we all know are staring us in the face. You have brought us to a place of reflection, may we not squander that opportunity to think again. To see the folly of many of the old ways. Help those we love to think again about faith and the God who created all and cares deeply for His creation.

Help humanity Father to live up to the challenge of saving lives, saving the planet and knowing that You are a merciful God who will save and that You are also a just and Holy God who will protect the weak the innocent and the lowly and You will not let humanity kill Your planet.

Father there are many souls who lack basic things in life among us. We pray for Your providence to reach out to the many places where poverty, famine and war strips away the necessary things needed to sustain life. Food, clothing and shelter and the love and attention of those around us. Holy Spirit touch those in office of government that they will awaken to the plight of the many not the few and govern justly and with integrity and honesty in every corner of this world.

We remember our parliaments in Westminster and the devolved governments in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Bless them with confidence and wisdom as we ease the lock down restrictions and help them to lay down party lines to help the community for all.

On this day we say thank you for parents and for the love and care they give to their children. In particular we ask a blessing on the fathers in this world across many cultures where men differ in beliefs and customs. We thank You Lord God for fathers, grampas, step dads and great grampas who make up the family unit. We think too of men and women who are spiritual parents to many who come to faith, bless them as they guide the tender hearts of Christians leading them to a maturity in the faith by their unselfish sacrifice of time talents and knowledge.

Abba Father we know so many we need to pray for this day and so hear the cry of Your children as we remember in prayer those who suffer in any way, from illness, anxiety and loneliness, bereavement and insecurity - in our time of silent prayer.

Loving Lord God we ask humbly that You hear from Heaven and gather the heart felt, silent and spoken, prayers of Your people and answer as befits Your will and in Your perfect timing.

We pray in Jesus name and for His sake.
Amen

Amen

As we conclude our worship time with a Hymn of proclamation:

CH4 286 Tell out my Soul

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord !
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice ;
tender to me the promise of his word ;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name !
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done ;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same ;
his holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might !
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word !
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore !**

*Timothy Dudley-Smith (b.1926)
based on the Magnificat from The New English Bible
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Before the blessing let me tell you the closing voluntary is the
Trumpet Voluntary by Jeremiah Clarke at the end

But first let us hear the words of the blessing.

Let us go in the joy and peace of the Lord with fearless hearts and minds and
may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us all –now and always.
Amen

Trumpet Voluntary by Jeremiah Clarke