

Ardrossan and Saltcoats Kirkgate Parish Church, Service Recording 12th July 2020. (Brian Murray Locum Minister)

Please excuse the grammar, punctuation and spelling, these transcripts are usually never seen by the congregation!

Opening Voluntary – Gabriel's Oboe, Ennio Morricone

Hello and welcome to this recording for the 12th July 2020, The sixth Sunday after Pentecost and as always a very warm welcome dear listeners, whether you are visiting our web page or are a regular listener, a phone-in buddy, or recorded memory stick listener, I do hope that this wee recording cheers you up a bit in this time of easing, but not quite yet opening of our churches.

Let me assure you that those in office bearing positions of the Kirkgate Church are still working for us behind the scenes. Looking at what the church hall will be like, writing up a risk assessment to allow us back into the building. Getting prepared.

So are many churches over the land. We will keep you up to date as far as we can as things are changing weekly at the moment. Someone asked do we wear a mask when we come back?

By the time we open again I and no one else knows for things change weekly if not daily. Bear with it a little longer and listen, if you want a chat with me about anything give me a call. My details are out there in the magazine and on the internet.

I hope you enjoyed Stuarts 'By Request' the other night. I loved it, what a relaxing and encouraging hour of listening to you all talk to one another through hymns and music. Come on give us more messages - encourage Stuart, he is working hard away in the background keeping the web updated and me in check.

The next broadcast will be the first Sunday of August, the 2nd hopefully and Stuart wants all requests in by the 26th July. Remember the email requests@kirkgatechurch.org.uk and details can also be seen on the web pages. I think I gave out a wrong one last week.

During July and August I will hopefully be taking a wee holiday now and again but there will still be something to listen to I also hope. Stuart has faithfully put these recordings on line every week since lock down without a break himself, but there are alternatives and we are working on it.

Right so 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, so close your eyes and take a deep breath or two.

Our call to worship is inspired by

Psalm 129 (these are my alter words to first person plural)

A song of ascents.

“The world has greatly oppressed us from our youth,”

let all in the Kingdom of God say;

“the world has greatly oppressed us from our youth,

but they have not gained the victory over us.

Plowmen have plowed the backs of the Christians

and made their furrows long.

But the Lord is righteous;

he has cut us free from the cords of the world and their ways.”

Amen

Let us look, then, to our master with our opening praise today is taken from
CH4 130

CH4 130 – “Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim”

Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,

and publish abroad his wonderful name ;

the name all-victorious of Jesus extol ;

his kingdom is glorious, and rules over all.

God ruleth on high, almighty to save ;

and still he is nigh, his presence we have ;

the great congregation his triumph shall sing,

ascribing salvation to Jesus our king.

‘Salvation to God who sits on the throne ! ’

let all cry aloud, and honour the Son :

the praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,

fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore, and give him his right :

all glory and power, all wisdom and might,

all honour and blessing, with angels above,

and thanks never-ceasing, and infinite love.

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

God of grace and love,

We rely on Your love

extended to us in all ways and at all times, extravagantly and with generosity.

We live day by day

knowing that Your care and concern is poured out for us in Your provision for our needs
and beyond our imagining.

You entrust us with the gift of the good news of the Gospel
and invite us to be partners in the sharing of the message of grace.

Day by day we realise the many gifts that are lavished upon us at times. We come to You to acknowledge and praise You for all Your goodness to us.

Merciful God,

We often appear to be choked by greed and selfishness

We indulge ourselves and ignore the needs of others.

We are quick to protect what we believe is our own

And forget to share the bounty You have so generously provided for us in this world.

Many times we might have thoughtlessly ignored the opportunities for bringing the love You have shown to our neighbours and those in need.

We are restricted in our spiritual growth by the power of selfishness and indulgence which take root in our lives.

We know we are in need of mercy, care and compassion and seek Your message of forgiveness and restoration once more.

Loving Lord God with contrite hearts we bring our beloved prayer Jesus taught and we repeat it before You now when we all 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 are from Isaiah 55 verses 10 - 13 and from Matthews Gospel chapter 13 verses 1-9 and jumping to 18-23. and as I know many appreciate hearing Deirdre read from scripture
Let us hear the word of God,**

Isaiah 55:10-13 (NIV)

¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,

giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹² For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (NIV)

The Parable of the Sower

13

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake.

²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat
and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he
told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went
out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the
birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground,
where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly,
since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were
scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other
seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.
⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a
hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!'

The Parable of the Sower Explained

¹⁸ 'Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the
word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one
comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what
was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground,

this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

Amen and may God bless these readings to our hearts and minds.

Let us sing along or just sit with eyes closed and listen to one of my favourite hymns for it brings back recent memories of standing with my feet in the warmish water of Lake Galilee and imagining Jesus in the boat shout to us over the water.

Lord You have come to the sea shore.CH4 532

CH4 532 Lord You have come to the seashore

Lord, you have come to the seashore,
neither searching for the rich nor the wise,
desiring only that I should follow.
O Lord, with your eyes set upon me,
gently smiling, you have spoken my name.
All I longed for I have found by the water,
at your side I will seek other shores.

Lord, see my goods, my possessions ;
in my boat you find no power, no wealth.
Will you accept, then, my nets and labour ?
O Lord, with your eyes set upon me,
gently smiling, you have spoken my name.
All I longed for I have found by the water,
at your side I will seek other shores.

Lord, take my hands, and direct them.
Help me spend myself in seeking the lost,
returning love for the love you gave me.
O Lord, with your eyes set upon me,
gently smiling, you have spoken my name.

All I longed for I have found by the water,
at your side I will seek other shores.

Lord, as I drift on the waters,
be the resting-place of my restless heart,
my life's companion, my friend and refuge.
O Lord, with your eyes set upon me,
gently smiling, you have spoken my name.
All I longed for I have found by the water,
at your side I will seek other shores.

Cesáreo Gabaráin (1936–1991)

translated Robert Trupia

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My Reflection today is entitled : Broadcasting the life giving seed.

So one day Jesus and His disciples are by the water and a crowd gathers. The easiest way to address them is to stand in a boat a little into the lake and use the water as an amplifier to the hillside. Jesus teaches here in Matthew in parables. Stories that resonate with those who work the land, who perhaps own small parcels of fields with borders of weeds, and with some wild grass seeds that are deadly if they get into the bread mix. let all who have ears to hear is a common term of the day to awaken the listener and make them pay attention. Its like saying listen up everyone!

Maybe we can assume Jesus is watching from the shore as a poor farmer broadcasting his seed. The precious life giving seed that seems so carelessly thrown around. But that was the way of the time. I have used the broadcasting method myself while sowing a lawn, some seed don't go where you want it too and my friendly blackbird might eat up some of the others if I'm not careful to rake it over.

Broadcasting is a good analogy as we use that term for TV and radio and now the internet. Broadcasting which goes out to all everywhere, but only those receptive and interested will pick up and listen.

What seems a haphazard idea of God to spread the message, the seed, in such a fashion will by the Spirit's intervention bear fruit depending on the type of ears that hear, representing the type of ground the seed falls in. Notice the seed is never the problem It is the responsibility of the sower and the ground on which the seed falls that might fall short of the Kingdom values of obedience and receptiveness to the word.

Yet we are assured that when the word of God goes out there that precious life giving word will not return void or empty Isa 55 verse 11.

You see our call is to be the sowers following the first broadcaster Jesus. We sow and scatter the word of God in spoken word and in deed wherever whenever and in various ways today.

Some would receive the news with joy, others I'm afraid don't, but then you know that already.

So we read some seed, precious though it was to the farmer, was wasted by landing on a hard surfaced pathway and stood no chance for the birds would eat it up before it could find any place to grow, some found rocky soil as a host and although sprung up fast burned off when the heat got too strong. Those were the people, and some we might have known in our lives, who heard the word of God and it impacted their hearts, but when challenged and hardship may have come, they gave up their faith, let it slip away.

The other worrying category is the seed growing up with the thorns around it. Faith should play the great part of a Christian's life but if it has to share in the importance of other things, worldly things like money. Jesus tells us one cannot serve God and Mammon (the love or wealth) at the same time

Matthew 6:21 New International Version (NIV)

21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

And then of course there is the seed that falls on the good ground, **yeah!!**, thank goodness for that for that we hope is the majority of the bag, never to be wasted but to bear many heads of grain for the farmer some 100, 60 or 30 fold.

In our passage from Matthew there appears an urgency to get oneself right with God and save yourself from the coming judgement. There is an urgency to their narrative. Many of the following parables Jesus talks of weeding out those who believe from those who remain in sin or enemies of God.

Goodness it seems so black and white.

What a plethora of ways we can find to share that word today other than face to face. We can reach out all over this world and have done for decades with broadcasts on TV and radio, and now like this over the internet. Pod casts, recordings, what a steep learning curve eh?

Dear listeners you can hear the word of God in your own private place and chose to keep listening or ignore the word of life and the promise of eternity with the Son Jesus as you will.

Or

you can go from this particular broadcast like many hundreds of broadcasts this day all across our land and contemplate what it all means. No one can force you or entice you in any other way than to preach you the Gospel that Jesus the Messiah or saviour, 'God with us' had a plan to save humanity from sin and destruction by sending Jesus to take yours and my sin away upon His own shoulders, to pay our ransom, we sometimes say, and yet to rise again on the third day to show us death has no sting in the Kingdom, for the victory over satan is won by Jesus.

Come all who proclaim Him their very own Saviour, the seed of the word planted deep in the heart for Him who loves us with an everlasting love and who, as we heard last week, takes away the cares of the world and gives us peace for the asking.

Now we are the sowers Christian brothers and sisters. We are the ones who profess Jesus our Lord and Saviour so we follow in His ways and seek to spread the Good News.

The farmer sows and walks away. He has done his job, he has scattered the seed and leaves it unto the sun and rain to water and nurture the plant to growth and to become strong and bear a harvest.

Christian's we are to scatter the word to anyone and everyone as we have opportunity to do so. Yet we will never save anyone, that transforming work is the domain of the Holy Spirit working within that person we love. We may never know the consequences of our witness, either through word or deed. Remember some seeds take longer than others to germinate.

However, let us also remember we may have a continuing responsibility for that person whom the Spirit touches and who wants to give their heart to Jesus. We don't walk away from that. We help lead them to confession and acceptance of our Lord for themselves. We keep close by them just as Jesus Holy Spirit does for us who believe. We befriend, mentor, nurture and disciple them in the ways of the faith. Is that not a God honouring way?

Some of you might well remember the Billy Graham crusades. OK so maybe you were a toddler!

Maybe that is where you first encountered Jesus. Billy never came to tea in your house, never phoned to see how you were doing after the rally. But thousands gave their lives to Christ on hearing his words. Such words that did not return void.

Peter burst forth from the upper room to give the first sermon at Pentecost and that day 3000 Jews many from the diaspora of the known world gave their lives to the Lord. Peter and the disciples never followed them all the way back to Alexandria, to Europe or to the far east, but the converts went with Jesus in their hearts.

Most of the converts we might see, though, happen around us and to those in close relationship with the sower. With you and me.

Anyway let me offer this thought.

What of those who fall by the wayside? On the pathways or rocky places where satan can rob them of the joy?

What of those who are raised with too many cares and fears, who cannot let go the love of the luxuries and self gain they have acquired or those who are hot for God only to back slide. Do we abandon them?

Or do we keep praying for them?

Do we persevere with them?

You see, in our churches we tend to be more pastoral than evangelical in the strict sense of the word. We never really walk away. We cannot, for we live here and we look out for the spiritual wellbeing of those we love around us in our families and the community. We have no transforming power on our own mind you, the saving grace comes from our God in Heaven.

So we might be like a farmer who notices the predicament of the seed in the thistles and go help cut the weeds down to let the young play thrive.

We might dig up the young plant away from the shallow soil and go plant it somewhere deeper with care and patience waiting on it forming fruit maybe just the little bit later than some others of the main crop.

Our plants in the garden think they have wheels over this lock down. Deirdre and I have been lifting and relocating, cutting and pruning.

Look, I know that is not the strict sense of what Matthew is eluding to here in the urgency of the narrative to get yourself right with God, but is it as black and white as that? Jesus himself would seek out the one lost soul and leave the 99 who were saved, don't we know?

So dear listener you may sit on either side of the fence today. You may try to put yourself into the place of the different types of ground today and say that's me. "I heard and fell in love with Jesus but now I'm backing off a bit". Or

you may say those who tried to tell me were over bearing my heart was hard ground and the word went right over my head, in fact it annoyed me so much I couldn't bear it.

O come let us pray then for the ones we love and the ones we will tell of the Gospel of life,

Let us pray for the church that a new harvest is ripening to carry on the message to another generation.

In this age of broadcasting, let us remember the sower broadcasting the seed and let us who love Jesus have a full bag to offer our fields in Ardrossan and Saltcoats or further afield (aye maybe as far as Arran) and let us tend that field of seedlings with grace, patience and love nurturing a faith in others giving life giving nutrients of the inerrant word of God to feed on even in these strange times of lock down. But listen, more important than all that, friends, firstly let us be fertile soil enough ourselves for the word of God to grow in.
Amen

Amen.

Prayer of Intercession

We are asked to remember the Balkans war in our prayers today. The harrowing murders and violence in Srebrenica and elsewhere. We shall remember them in our prayers today and of course all those who are still experiencing violence and war. Healing and forgiveness may take many many years and in some cases never.

Let us pray then that God will show mercy to us all as we emerge from the pandemic of Corona Virus and enter a world economic recession where the vulnerable always seem to be hardest hit.

Let us pray.

Source of life and hope

Make us aware of our opportunities for witness and service, even in unlikely places.

Focus our attention on our responsibilities,
and not on the impact of what we are doing as Your disciples.

Strengthen our resolve to be faithful

and responsive to the message of Your inclusive love

so demonstrated in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

God of compassion

We pray for the many who are oppressed

by crushing political and economic circumstances.
Those persecuted on grounds of faith or ethnicity
or background. We pray especially for the eastern european places in the
Balkan states and for Srebrenica where so much bloodshed took place
almost three decades ago and yet hearts might still be sore at the memory of
lost ones. Father in Your mercy comfort those who remember, those who
were caught up in the violence and discrimination and comfort also those with
guilt that cripples them for their actions. Bring peace and healing Father God
where it is needed the most.
We pray for families torn apart by age-old feuds, petty tensions,
ill-founded jealousies
and destructive attitudes

The men and women
ground down by lack of food and opportunities of inclusion.
The children oppressed by discrimination and disadvantage,
lack of resources
and failures of education.
The downtrodden and homeless,
Father - Empower, encourage and endorse
the disciples of Jesus
who try to address the needs of the isolated and lonely, often at enormous
personal cost.
The concerned workers
who day by day bring food and shelter, care and compassion
to the hungry and the homeless both here in our community and further
afield. Especially at this time of restrictions due to the Corona Virus where
many are fearful to leave their homes.
We raise before You the special people, **the missionaries** in the world of
religion, business and economics who try to overturn the status quo
and bring health and healing
in an environment alien to the Gospel. Let them feel You close aiding and
protecting as they travel and speak out bravely in Jesus name.

Those who hear the world's poorest cry out for justice and mercy and
respond without question or analysis of impact.

We remember the sick in mind, body and spirit,
the dying and bereaved, and those who care for them, that they may always
be aware
of the presence of Your spirit among them and in their daily lives.

We think especially this day about countries in South America, North
America, Yemen, places on the beautiful continent of Africa, across Europe
and all those corners of this world that lie forgotten yet suffer the same illness

such as the Covid 19. Illnesses that claims many lives and afflicts many others. Father God in Your mercy bring peace comfort and healing to all those caught up in this Corona virus pandemic.

We continue to pray for our churches at this time of severe restriction, that by Your Spirit congregations may hold firm together and look forward to the coming day when we shall worship together once more beside each other. Thank You Father for all those who have managed to use the internet and phone lines to keep the faithful together and the wonder of technology that must surely play a large part of the future in spending the word of life - our Bibles.

And so Abba Father as we go through another week stay close by us, hold us in Your warm embrace protecting our bodies and minds and bringing a new depth of Spiritual wellbeing for we come to You now in and through Jesus.
In whose name we pray.

Amen

[We conclude our worship time with that old classic](#)

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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Thank you for tuning in until we meet again God willing
Let us hear the words of the blessing.

Let us go in the joy and peace of the Lord spreading the good news as far as
we are able and may we all go in joy and peace and the blessing of God
Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always.
Amen

The UK churches sing a virtual blessing from May this year posted on
youtube.

<https://youtu.be/PUtI3mNj5U>