

starters for Sunday

Second Sunday after Pentecost

22 June 2014

The Mission and Discipleship Council would like to thank Rev Roderick Campbell, Minister of Appin linked with Lismore, for his thoughts on the second Sunday after Pentecost.

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Quick Guide...

Helping people prepare for reading the Bible in worship can make a real difference. Overcoming nerves, reading in ways suitable to the text, speaking clearly etc.

You may wish to email these three links to the people reading Scripture on Sunday to support them in their involvement in worship: [Managing your nerves](#); [Creative readings](#); [Worship at the Lectern](#)

[Genesis 21: 8-21](#)

Separation of Ishmael and Isaac at Sarah's request. Abraham's pain and provision with God's promise that as out of Isaac there would come forth a great nation so to out of Ishmael there would come forth a great nation. Abraham is double blessed or is the world doubly cursed. Jewish/Christian tradition roots in Isaac, Mohammed and Islam root in Ishmael.

Pressure on both women. On Sarah the wife of Abraham, her struggle for survival with Isaac and his position to succeed Abraham. The weaker position of Hagar who bore Ishmael out of wedlock and is called slave girl and her son.

Although Ishmael is excluded from the direct line neither he nor his mother are excluded from God's promise and protection. Hagar's eyes are opened and she sees a well from which she draws water to give the child.

[Psalm 86: 1-10, 16-17](#)

An individual lament, may have been a king assailed by enemies, according to Kselman and Barre. It may of course simply have been a faithful worshipper. The Psalm breaks into four parts: verses 1 – 7 a confident supplication for God's help. Verses 8 – 10 expression of confidence in God. Verses 11 – 13 thanksgiving for oracle. Verses 14 – 17 lament with expressions of confidence.

Psalm matched to Genesis by reference in v 16 (REB) to the 'slave girls son' other translations talk of 'son of your handmaid' i.e. servants son.



[Romans 6: 1b–11](#)

Paul places great emphasis of the self-finding freedom in union with Christ. By following the pattern of Jesus baptism, a person dies to the effects of sin and becomes open to the possibility of fullness of life in Christ. Jesus death and resurrection give to the person the gift of new life with its immeasurable possibilities.

[Matthew 10: 24–39](#)

This passage follows Matthew's memory of Jesus commissioning his disciples. Jesus makes no bones about the cost of following him and what response the disciples might expect.

He keeps their feet on the ground reminding them the pupil is not greater than the teacher. He enjoins them not to be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. He proceeds to value the disciples' life and to remind them of their loyalty. This is followed by the powerful passage about inter-generational conflict and then the great injunction to take up the cross and follow Christ.

Notes for Sermons

There is an abundance of material here. Each of the readings can stand alone and some people will grasp that. Genesis can be a consideration of the breadth of the promises of God. The futility of human insistence on correctness and therefore potential for division, and the consequences which over the centuries have and still do flow from blind adherence.

The Psalmist gives a powerful reflective message which I think people not only need to hear but also to practice. Too often we rely on the thoughts and the experiences of those who have gone before and do not take the time of make the effort to put ourselves and our living context into the reflective relationship with God. The Psalms not only teach us of historic relations with God but open the door to our own living expression of these. Sometimes the Psalmists open the door for a developing spirituality which in a time of constant change the Church may well need to learn again.



Romans creates the opportunity to explore new life in Jesus. There are a variety of theological themes which can be found here, but the practical expression of the possibilities created by Jesus life death and resurrection, for the well-being of men and women, rather than an emphasis on personal salvation is a message the world has been waiting long for.

Matthew offers a very powerful opportunity to look at the faith as it is passed from generation to generation. Where are our young, what is it they will receive, or inherit from us? Will they do so grudgingly or rather as Matthew suggests seek a freedom which is given to them anew in Christ? Each generation is called to take up its particular cross, and try to interpret through experience and prayer how the Christian responds. Nor is there any doubt the cost of discipleship can form the basis of powerful invitational preaching.

There are a variety of cross threads which might be woven into a tapestry. The faithfulness of God and Abraham, Hagar's discovery of it and the Psalmist's confidence through experience sit well together. As Paul's understanding of new life Christ and the discovery of what that new life might mean for the future and missing generation. It was a new and difficult message from Paul to the Church in Corinth as was Jesus challenge to the disciples. Therein I believe is the kernel of the nut of faith the Church has to crack in the present day.

Time with Children

A little exercise in trust being an experience which strengthens and deepens faith. This can be rooted in any of the readings for the day.

Care is required but adequate adults in attendance will be sufficient.

Invite children to the front and ask them to appoint their leader. Invite the leader to take them on a journey through an easy part of the sanctuary, up the aisle and back down.

Now carefully blindfold the followers, ask them to hold hands and follow the leader around a different route with maybe a step and corner in it.

So the leader has to know where he/she is going, children need to learn to trust, also to pass on information, so a team of disciples is created. Then point to Jesus in Matthew's forming the team and sending God's love through them into the world.



Prayers

Collect

O God our defender,
when storms rage about us
and cause us to be afraid,
rescue your people from despair,
deliver your sons and daughters from fear,
and preserve us all from unbelief;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Prayer of Approach, Confession and Supplication

Call to Prayer: “Take heart, you seekers after God. For the Lord listens to the poor and does not despise his captive people”

Let us Pray

Eternal Spirit of life, who in Jesus Christ has revealed the fulfilling potential of love. Draw close to each of us this day as we offer worship and praise. All humankind are created in your image, in Christ we are taught that our potential is only realised by receiving and by giving the gift of love.

We are seekers after God, who in our journeying need constantly to be reminded that all around us in the created order there are signs of your abundant love. In the strangest of places are you to be found, in the lives and loves, in the pain and the pleasures, in weakness and in strength, in wealth and poverty.

So often we turn our eyes to the successful, the secure, but you Lord listen to the poor and invite us to learn from them; be they poor in material terms or 'poor in Spirit'. Forgive us if we have looked for you in the wrong places; forgive us if we have listened to the wrong voices; forgive us if we have followed the wrong pathways. Touch us by your Spirit and alert our beings



to the wonder and mystery of your love. Use that power within us and around us, to direct our seeking; to sharpen our hearing and to follow willingly in the pathway of Jesus of Nazareth.

Continue with us in our worship, blessing us and enabling us by your power to be a blessing to others. May your Spirit lead our searching, guide our listening and keep our feet firmly in the footsteps of Jesus,

Who when we pray, taught us to say: Our Father...

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For life and love,

For family and friends,

We offer our gratitude.

For those in whom we confide,

For those who lend us their strength,

For those who are compassionate.

We offer our gratitude.

For all who speak an understanding word.

For all whose hands reach out

For all whose hearts are warm.

We offer our gratitude

For your Church, the body of Christ

For all who minister and serve

For everyone whose life is touched by Christ

We offer our gratitude

Grant that your Spirit will give us grateful hearts that in all our living we will see your blessings.

Grant us also that we will remember the needs of others.

We pray for those who not not that life and love are inextricably linked.

For those who are bereft of family and friends.

Be to them their constant companion.



We pray for those who walk alone
 For those who must depend on their own strength,
 And for all who have no experience of compassion.

Be to them their constant companion

We pray for all whose ears are closed to the word of life and love.
 For those who have not the trust to grasp an open hand,
 For those who know only coldness of heart.

Be to them their constant companion

For your Church we pray, that as the body of Christ we may be to others even as Christ is to us.
 Let our ministry and service know no boundaries
 And let all know that in Christ there is welcome and acceptance.

So by your Holy Spirit, re-enliven your Church, with older folk dreaming their dreams and
 younger folk seeing your vision of the Kingdom, real and living.

In Jesus name
 Amen.

Musical Suggestions

CH4 53	How greatly blest the are
CH4 120	God, we praise you. God, we bless you
CH4 187	There's a wideness in God's mercy
CH4 355	You Lord are both Lamb and Shepherd
CH4 363	We have a gospel to proclaim
CH4 402	Take up your cross
CH4 447	Sing to the world of Christ
CH4 527	Lord make us servants of your peace
CH4 533	Will you come and follow me
CH4 556	I need thee every hour



Additional Resources

Resourcing Mission



[Resourcing Mission](#) is host to Starters for Sunday and other key mission resources for download and purchase. Online booking is available for [Mission & Discipleship events](#). Please check back regularly, as new items are being added all the time. If there is something you'd like to see on this new site, please [contact us](#) via the website.

Prayer Resources

These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might look for in prayers. [Pray Now 2013](#) is available now from [St Andrew Press](#). [Revealing Love](#) will be available to purchase from November 2013.



Music Resources

The hymns mentioned in this material are ideas of specific hymns you might choose for this week's themes. However, for some excellent articles on church music and ideas for new music resources, please check out our online music magazine [Different Voices](#).

Preaching Resources



These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might preach this Sunday. [Preachers Perspectives](#) is a resource where we have asked twelve preachers to share the insights they have gathered through their experiences of writing and delivering sermons regularly.

Scots Worship Resources

[The Kirk's Ear](#) - Scots in the Kirk series for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and other times of the year

[Worship Ouk bi Ouk](#) - Metrical psalms, hymns, prayers and words for worship

[Scots Sacraments](#) may give you helpful material if you are celebrating Communion or have a Baptism.

The Mission and Discipleship Council would like to express its thanks to the Rev Roderick Campbell for providing us with this Sunday's material.

Please note that the views expressed in these materials are those of the individual writer and not necessarily the official view of the Church of Scotland, which can be laid down only by the General Assembly.

