

Sunday Service 15th January 2023 at St Bride's Church Newtonmore.

Good morning and a warm welcome to our Service at St. Bride's this morning. I bring you good wishes and health and happiness for 2023.

Church notices

Kingussie Parish Church

Insh Village Church service tonight at 6pm

Wednesday 18th January Babies and Toddlers meet from 9:00am

Thursday 19th January Church Hall open to everyone from 10am until 4pm to come and enjoy a Warm space. Hot drinks and snacks served throughout the day with soup and bread served at lunchtime. Time to enjoy a chat.

Gathering Prayer for the Season of Epiphany

May your star pause over this place of worship, illuminating Your truth and justice. Confront us anew with Your call to look for power in lowly places and to bring our gifts of worship. You, who are long gone from the stable, but present in every place and time – God with us.
Amen

1st **Hymn 363** We have a gospel to proclaim

1st Reading: Psalm 40 v 1-11 Mr Will Carey

I waited patiently for the Lord;
he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth,

a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear the Lord
and put their trust in him.

Blessed is the one
who trusts in the Lord,
who does not look to the proud,
to those who turn aside to false gods.
Many Lord my God,
are the wonders you have done,
the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
they would be too many to declare.

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire—
but my ears you have opened—
burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.
Then I said, “Here I am, I have come—
it is written about me in the scroll.
I desire to do your will, my God;
your law is within my heart.”

I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;
I do not seal my lips, Lord,
as you know.
I do not hide your righteousness in my heart;
I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.
I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness
from the great assembly.

Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord;
may your love and faithfulness always protect me.

2nd **Hymn 533** Will you come and follow me

2nd Reading: John Ch 1 v 29-42 Mr Will Carey

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before

me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."

John's Disciples Follow Jesus

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" "Come," he replied, "and you will see."

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

3rd Hymn 510 Jesus calls us here to meet him Verses 1-3

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

We continue with the Epiphany theme of the revealing of Jesus.

The day after the baptism of Jesus, John the Baptist saw Jesus coming towards him and declared,

' Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'

John witnesses to Jesus and to what happened at his baptism. John points people away from following him, to follow Jesus, as he is, of greater importance because Jesus is the Son of God.

The next day John was with two of his followers and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God.' To describe Jesus in this way was to build on the promises of the Scriptures.

Going right back to Genesis Ch 22 v 8, Abraham said, 'God will provide a lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' In doing this and in staying Abraham's hand, God rescued Isaac from death.

The Passover Lamb celebrates the gaining of freedom from slavery and from death. In Isaiah, the Suffering Servant, whom the Christian Church sees as an image of Jesus, is described as a 'lamb led to the slaughter.'

The effect of the Baptist's words was for two of his followers to leave him and follow Jesus. As ever with seekers, they are met by the one they seek. Jesus turns to meet them. St Augustine said that we cannot even begin to seek God unless he has already found us.

Jesus asks, 'What are you looking for?'

This is a good question to ask all of us: is it knowledge, security, meaning, a purpose, peace, or is it a relationship with the living God? When the disciples ask, 'Where are you staying?' Jesus invites them, 'Come and see.'

The only real way to truly learn of Jesus is to abide in his presence, to stay with him. Faith is not about believing in facts; it is having a living relationship with Jesus. As an interesting aside, we are told it was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

Could it be that the writer of the Gospel remembered this well and that this disciple was John who would witness to Jesus through the Gospel and in this way point people to Jesus?

The other disciple was Andrew. The first thing Andrew did after meeting Jesus was to go and tell his brother, 'We have found the Messiah' – that is, the Christ, the Anointed One.

Andrew brought Simon to Jesus. Later he would bring the boy with five barley loaves to Jesus. Later still he would bring a group of Greeks to Jesus. What greater service can you do than to bring someone to Jesus?

It is often proclaimed that the Church is suffering from a crisis in the West. There is a shortage of ministers. Allied to this is a shortage of money. But more money or more clergy will not cure the crisis. The Church needs a dose of Andrews!

It needs people who will abide with Christ and then bring others to him.
This is not the complete picture of the times we now live in.

How many of you would agree or disagree with these words?? Much food
for thought! Amen

PRAYERS For Ourselvesbeing still

Let us pray

Lord of all,

You are a God of power, mighty and mysterious, and we thank you for that truth, for the knowledge that you are sovereign over all. But we thank you also that you are a God of peace, a God whom we can meet in stillness and silence, and who speaks in a voice like a gentle whisper. Draw near to us in the quietness,

and may we hear your voice

Teach us to make time and space for you – the opportunity to pause and ponder, to take stock of our lives, to reflect on your goodness, and to understand what it is that you would say to us. Draw near to us in the quietness,

and may we hear your voice

Help us to be aware of your presence here among us, and , through meeting with you now, may we live each day, each moment, in the knowledge that you are always by our side. Teach us to share every moment with you, confident that you are there, and that you care about our welfare. Draw near to us in the quietness,

and may we hear your voice

Help us to use all times such as this, so that we may grow closer to you, and so that prayer may not be some occasional activity, still less some formal duty, but a joyful relationship and a constant experience of your renewing love deep within.

Draw near to us in the quietness,

and may we hear your voice.

Lord of all,

We have come in the quietness. Go with us now into the turmoil of life, with all its noise and confusion, all its demands and responsibilities, and may your peace rest with us there, this day and forevermore

And 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. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.

Amen

Our closing Hymn 417 Now the green blade riseth from the buried grain

please remain standing following this Hymn for the Benediction

BENEDICTION

Go now, redeemed in love, renewed in faith, restored in strength, and refreshed in spirit. In the name of the risen Christ who goes before you.

Amen

Hymn 786 May the God of peace go with us