

Linkage News

Services Sunday 15 August 2021

Kirkurd & Newland Zoom Worship - 10am - David Henderson-Howat (see email for link)

St Andrew's Zoom Worship - 11.30am - David Henderson-Howat (see email for link)

Carlops Church Zoom Worship - 10am - Mary McElroy (see email for link)



Linkage wide Outdoor Communion Service - Sunday 22nd August at 3pm

We will hold a Communion Service in the graveyard area of Newlands old church on Sunday 22nd August at 3pm. This will be a joint service and will involve the ministers from the whole of the new linkage. Everyone from all 6 churches of West Tweeddale is warmly invited to attend. The site is by the bridge over the river Lyne; it was a place of worship for around 500 years until the early 1800s. It does involve a short walk through the field from the church car park but is not too strenuous so most people would be able to get there but we can also offer land rover transport for anyone who needs it. We would ask people to bring folding chairs or rugs and come warmly dressed as well as bringing a flask of tea and a bun so that there is an opportunity for some chat afterwards.

We hope to have the involvement of people from all 6 congregations at this service -both as readers and with musical contributions.

It should be a great way of sharing worship and fellowship within the new linkage. Newlands is a relatively central spot and we can be totally flexible with numbers as it is outdoors. If the weather is really horrible we will postpone to Sunday 5th September as it would not be possible to transfer it to the church because of potential numbers.

We will take a cancellation decision by noon on Sunday 22nd.

Foodbank Donations

For Peeblesshire Foodbank
And
Food Facts & Friends in Penicuik
are always welcomed
at The Co-Op, West Linton



HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

LAMANCHA | NEWLANDS | KIRKURD
WEST LINTON | CARLOPS

Volunteers Are here to help?

FREEPHONE 0800 121 6212

FUTURE COMMUNICATIONS

Sharing of News & Information
Anything you would like shared should be emailed to
intimations@standrews-westlinton.org
by *Thursday lunchtime* would be really helpful to allow
time to collate and distribute it.

Locum Minister Rev. Nancy Norman
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Interim Moderator Rev. Calum Macdougall
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On Reflection

REFLECTION on John 6. 35, 41 – 51

If you should lean down right down to the ground, to bring your eye level with the level of the ground, and then look along that ground level at what's before you, you'd likely see an uneven and bumpy surface – clods of earth, even little grains of soil, single blades of grass poking up, little clumps of foliage, (beetles), eye level with hedgehogs. It certainly isn't our usual line of sight, but the shape and outline of those tiny things we see at such close quarters are not unlike – in fact, VERY like – what we see in the distance, on the horizon, when we stand upright and look out the window – we see hills and mountains – the uneven and bumpy surfaces, just like those clods of earth; we see trees and woods and forests – just like those single blades of grass and clumps of foliage we saw at close quarters. But whatever our line of vision, high or low, the shapes and outlines we observe are the same pattern, just on different scales. As if everything in creation is all of a piece.

That might seem an odd way to reflect on the passage from John's gospel, but the way he writes is like that analogy – what he reveals to us is on different levels, with different lines of sight, on different scales, but it is the same truth, whatever the scale – bit by bit, he points us to the ultimate truth, which is the mystery he saw, and set out in the very first line of his gospel: *'In the beginning was the Word...'*. He is a master of what I'd call 'layering' – of going deeper and deeper into the truth of life, the truth of Jesus, the truth of God – that inspired him to write it down.

Last Sunday's reading was John's story of the feeding of the 5,000. Ordinary loaves of bread – bread baked in ordinary ovens that morning, loaves that you could hold in your hands. In Jesus' hands, they were given, broken, blessed and shared, to satisfy the needs of hungry men, women and children. Just so, in the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, that comes down to us, these countless generations, centuries on, from when that prayer was first uttered: *'give us this day our daily bread'*. So simple.

That's the eye-level, first line of sight that John gives us: our daily bread.

And with that, the crowd had been filled – but they had clamoured for more – how odd – even with all the bread that had been left over and collected up by the basketful. It was something else, something more, that people sought – something else on an entirely different level that they needed.

And now, in chapter 6 of the gospel – we find that new level, a closer one, a deeper one, in this most extraordinary chapter with its long discourse on the meaning of bread – in which John points us to the truth that lies beyond, beneath every line of vision he gives us – points us to that which alone can reach that deeper, gnawing, desperate, universal hunger that we all have, that defines our humanity, even if we cannot articulate it.

John sees it, and points us beyond the bread, to the one who is the Bread of Life. Bread with a capital 'B', not just a little 'b'.

'I am the Bread of Life', Jesus said. *'Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'*

This isn't daily bread that he is speaking about – this is more than ordinary things that we can hold in our hands.

It is himself. *It's me!* he is saying.

And we are suddenly up so close in our line of vision. As close as we could get. And it's daunting. The Bread of Life that is the eternal Word of God from heaven.

John's gospel does that to us, again and again. Brings us face to face with Jesus as the Word from God. Jesus as the Bread of Life – given for each of us, given for the life of the world

Only in John's gospel do we find Jesus speaking of himself in this distinctive *'I am'* form. I am the bread. I am the light. I am the door, the shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the vine, the way, the truth. Not that he is God, but that he is united with God, and identified with him.

We long for, hunger, for fulfilment, and John brings us up as close as we can get: bread, water, life, light, truth. To all such human longings, religious and secular, John's Jesus says: *I am it. C'est moi. It's me.* Given for you.

The uniting of our vision, and our faith.

Rev. Nancy Norman