

## Father Day service 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020

Welcome & Announcements

Call to worship (based on psalm 68)

Praise Song 'Broken vessels'

Prayer

OT Reading Proverbs 4:1-12

Video 'Daaaad!'

Children's address (Laura Ewing)

Hymn 'Father we adore You' (29/9/19)

New Testament Reading Gal 4:4-7

Sermon

Prayers for others (Norma Reid)

Hymn 'How deep the Father's love for us' (15/9/19)

Video Blessing

## Welcome & Announcements

Good morning & welcome to our service of worship for Regents St Methodist Church in Newtownards. Today being Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> June, Father's day ...we will focus our thoughts on giving thanks to God for our dad's & those who have been as fathers to us. And we will remember and worship God as Abba Father... God

the perfect parent ...who loves us with a incredible love..However just before we hear our call to worship I have a few notices.

Firstly, I am sure that many of you have heard that the Northern Ireland Executive have given a provisional date of 29<sup>th</sup> June for when Church doors can open again in a wider way. Now I just wanted you all to know that there are still conversations going on to clarify what that may look like & what restrictions there may be. In terms of ourselves as leaders in Regent St we are discussing our way forward & how we can open at the right time & in the right way so that we can provide as safe an environment as possible. We also want to maintain our connections with those people who might be hesitant about coming out at the moment. So for us this might mean gradual steps towards getting back to normal & indeed as we move forward we should expect things to be a bit different. God has been stirring new opportunities through this time & I would ask us all to pray & ask Him to lead us as we take steps forward over the next days....

With that in mind can I let you know that the Home Missions dept is hosting a webinar at 8pm (thats a seminar through Zoom) tomorrow evening & if any of you are interested in thinking more about what God might be saying to us & the ways forward from here do register using the link that was with the text version of this email. **You can sign up for the webinar** <https://bit.ly/UnlockingWebinar-1>. Please note that each participant will need to register using this link.

I would also encourage you to keep checking our webpage for latest developments & notices.

Finally can I wish Edgar Allen a happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday for next Saturday & also congratulate Tanita & Andy Lee on the birth of baby Carrigan & also Paula & Brian on becoming grandparents...

So now we take a moment of quiet as we ask God to help us worship Him today..... & we use a call to worship taken from Psalm 68, please join with me as we say the bold type together.

**Father's Day Call to Worship** (based on Psalm 68:4-5, 19)

Come, sing praises to God! Rejoice in his presence!  
For he is our God: A Father to the fatherless,  
And the defender of all who need protection;  
The One in whom the lonely find a home,  
and the prisoner finds release.

**Bless the Lord, the God of our salvation,  
who sustains and strengthens us, day after day!**  
Let's worship God together!

We join our voices in praise now as we sing 'broken vessels' led by the praise group. We hear now our Old Testament reading.

**Praise 'Broken vessels' (Amazing grace)**

All these pieces, broken and scattered  
In mercy gathered, mended and whole  
Empty handed but not forsaken  
I've been set free, I've been set free

[Chorus 1]

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost but now I am found

Was blind but now I see

Oh I can see You now, Oh I can see the love in Your eyes.  
Laying Yourself down, Raising up the broken to life.

[Verse 2]

You take our failure, You take our weakness  
You set Your treasure in jars of clay  
So take this heart, Lord, I'll be Your vessel  
The world to see, Your life in me

[Chorus ]

[Instrumental]

[Chorus X2 ]

**Opening prayer**

Amazing grace how sweet the sound... that saved a wretch like me,  
I once was lost but now I am found..Was blind but now I see

Lord God we come again this morning to worship You the Lord of amazing grace... the God of deepest love & generous grace...  
The Great ***I am*** but also the one who draws close to us now...  
Lord give us eyes again this morning to See You ... to See the Love in Your eyes ...love for us... A love that led Jesus your only Son to lay down His life that we broken & scattered might be mended & made whole... Heavenly Father touch us

again this day with your sacrificial love & amazing grace... So that we might worship You with all we are & all that we will be..

God of mercy... surrounded now by your perfect Father's love for us we pause... & in the stillness we confess that our love for You & for others is not always what it should be....& we ask for fresh forgiveness & grace this day....

*You take our failure, You take our weakness  
You set Your treasure in jars of clay  
So take this heart, Lord, I'll be Your vessel  
The world to see, Your life in me*

We hear the good news of amazing grace... that in & through the work of Jesus Christ- our sins are forgiven. Help us now to continue to worship You Heavenly Father in Spirit & in truth.

#### **Old Testament Reading Proverbs 4 NLT A Father's Wise Advice**

**4** My children, listen when your father corrects you.

Pay attention and learn good judgment, for I am giving you good guidance. Don't turn away from my instructions. For I, too, was once my father's son, tenderly loved as my mother's only child. My father taught me, "Take my words to heart. Follow my commands, and you will live. Get wisdom; develop good judgment. Don't forget my words or turn away from them. Don't turn your back on wisdom, for she will protect you. Love her, and she will guard you. Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do! And whatever else you do, develop good judgment. If you prize wisdom, she will

make you great. Embrace her, and she will honour you. She will place a lovely wreath on your head; she will present you with a beautiful crown." My child, listen to me and do as I say, and you will have a long, good life. I will teach you wisdom's ways and lead you in straight paths. When you walk, you won't be held back; when you run, you won't stumble. Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life.

We give thanks to God for those words of wisdom taken from the book of proverbs... and we remember that at times our Heavenly Father corrects & leads us ...sometimes even into ways or situations that we wouldn't normally venture into... But we remember that God always leads us on in love.... We are now going to watch a video for Father's day entitled Daaaad! Then we will have our children's thought.

#### **Video 'Daaaad!'**

#### **Children's address (Laura Ewing)**

#### **Hymn 'Father we adore You'**

*Father, we adore You  
Lay our lives before You  
How we love You*

*Jesus, we adore You  
Lay our lives before You  
How we love You*

*Spirit, we adore You*

*Lay our lives before You*

*How we love You*      Lyrics Copyright © 1972 CCCM Music/Maranatha!Music.

**New Testament Reading Galatians 4:4-7** (NLT)

**4** <sup>4</sup> *But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law.* <sup>5</sup> *God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.* <sup>6</sup> *And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father."* <sup>7</sup> *Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.*

**Sermon** One of our favourite games to play as a family is **UNO**.... for those of you who don't know it, the aim of the game is to get rid of your cards & normally you can only do this by putting down a card of a certain colour or number when it's your turn. However there are a small number of special WILD cards; cards which don't have to follow those rules, cards which can change the colour or number... These are important game changing cards... & if I have one I am always wondering when might be the right time to play it...

Well in today's passage we hear that God knew just the right time to introduce His game changer.... '*But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law*' 4:4-5. Yes at just the right time God SENT His Son....He sent Jesus to

change the direction of the world... He sent Him to save us.. to set us free as it says in vs 5 BUT more than that to enable us to be adopted into God's own family....as His children.

Isn't that amazing....? Two moments I will never forget was when I first got to hold my two children not long after they were born... & yes I nervously put out my arms ...& looked down at those little faces & was just astounded by just how lovely they were.... I remember looking into my daughters little eyes as a new Dad & thinking this is so special...I am so lucky ...things couldn't get any better.... But here is the amazing thing this Father's day... that is how God feels about you.... Jesus came not just to set us free from sin & save us from condemnation under the law, but He came to draw us into God's family as very own children vs 5.

I want us to dwell on that this morning.... to hear it again... God loved us enough that He didn't just send His Son to save us but He sent Him to bring us home...to adopt us into His family...to take us in His arms & say my beloved child....

Sadly some Christians can think of God the Father as being so Holy, so majestic, so awesome that they somehow feel that He really only puts up with us because of what Jesus did on the cross... Almost as if God begrudgingly goes... ah well I suppose you did pay for their sins so I better accept them...even though they really don't deserve it... But slowly read our passage from Galatians 4 again & you will see that God Father , Son & Spirit

were all involved in saving us undeserving sinners & adopting us into His family...giving us new identities.

See how God purposefully sent Jesus at just the right time vs 4 but that God also sent *the Spirit of His Son*, that's another name for the Holy Spirit, *into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father. Yes God sent Jesus & God sent the Holy Spirit, that's not a reluctant parent...that's a Father who longs to be united with an estranged child....a Father who desires most of all a deep close relationship with us.... A Father who wants us to know Him & talk to Him & so yes He sends the Holy Spirit to work in us...to stir us & prompt us & enable us to call Him Abba.. daddy...*

If you find that hard to get your head around this morning, that God would long for you & me to call Him dad, then you're probably not the only one. Yes when we consider God's majesty, His holy character, when we think of His perfection & our lack of it... Then, yes, we might find it difficult to really take in God's love & concern for us. And sadly if we haven't had good experiences of family life, if our earthly father has been absent, or let us down in some way then it could be even more difficult for us...

Sadly we know that in our world today many children don't really know their fathers or they have a poor relationship with them. And if we are honest we know that even the best earthy father makes mistakes.... So there may be some of you watching this today who struggle with the idea of calling God ...*Father...* as it

might bring back painful memories... & if that is you today then know that God knows & understands. And yet this day we remember that when Jesus was asked how we should pray to God he offered us the most famous of prayers which begins... *Our father in heaven...* Matthew 6:9. You see Jesus wanted those who followed Him to grasp the important truth that God isn't just up there beyond us... But that He is deeply concerned about us & wants to be involved in our lives.... Just like a really good earthly father would for their children...

So the message today is a simple one... it is that has always loved us... He has always wanted a close deep relationship with us & that Jesus came & paid the price of the cross so that we could really experience that.... so that we could know the close embrace of God...

It is told that Ernest Hemingway once wrote a short story called "The Capital of the World." In it, he told the story of a father and his teenage son who were estranged from one another. The son's name was Paco. He had wronged his father. As a result, in his shame, he had run away from home.

In the story, the father searched all over Spain for Paco, but still he could not find the boy. Finally, in the city of Madrid, in a last desperate attempt to find his son, the father placed an ad in the daily newspaper. The ad read: "*PACO, MEET ME AT THE HOTEL MONTANA. NOON TUESDAY. ALL IS FORGIVEN. PAPA.*"

The father in Hemingway's story prayed that the boy would see the ad; and then maybe, just maybe, he would come to the Hotel Montana. On Tuesday, at noon, the father arrived at the hotel. When he did, he could not believe his eyes. An entire squadron of police officers had been called out in an attempt to keep order among 800 young boys. It turned out that each one of them was named Paco. And each one of them had come hoping to meet their respective father & find forgiveness & an embrace in front of the Hotel Montana....

Let us pray...Heavenly Father... as we celebrate fatherhood today...so we worship You as the perfect Father... the One who has never stopped loving us... the One whose arms are always open wide to us... Lord God help each of us feel your embrace today, & for those who may have wandered to a foreign place... help them know that You are always watching down the road... waiting longing... to run & meet them as they take their first faltering steps back home.... In Jesus name we pray.

And Norma Reid is now going to lead us in our prayers for others.

### Prayers for Others on Father's day- Norma Reid

So we sing our final hymn together as we celebrate & give thanks for the depth of God's love for us... & we will close after that with a final video blessing. Do enjoy the rest of your Father's day & remember God's love for you....

Hymn : How deep the Father's love for us  
How vast beyond all measure  
That He should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure

How great the pain of searing loss  
The Father turns His face away  
As wounds which mar the Chosen One  
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross  
My sin upon His shoulders  
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice  
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held Him there  
Until it was accomplished  
His dying breath has brought me life  
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything  
No gifts, no power, no wisdom  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ  
His death and resurrection

Why should I gain from His reward?  
I cannot give an answer  
But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom

Why should I gain from His reward?  
I cannot give an answer

But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom

Songwriters: Stuart Townend © CAPITOL CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROUP

**Closing video Blessing from children.**