

Sunday 23rd August return to Church

Welcome & Announcements (Caroleen)

Call to worship video 'Welcome back'

Praise Song Praise group video 'Still my soul'

Prayer (Colin)

OT Reading Exodus 34:29-35 (Jennifer)

Giving thanks for collection (Colin)

NT Reading 2 Cor3:12-18 (Jennifer)

Sermon (Colin)

Prayers for Others (Laura)

Hymn Lord the light of your love is shining (30/6/19)

Blessing (Colin)

Good Morning & welcome back.... things look different & we might be restricted in what we do but it is so good to see all of you again... masks and all! It is also wonderful to know that there are others joining with us through live stream & that also the service is being recorded so that all who wish can see it on our website.. I just want to say a quick but sincere word of thanks to all of you who have made that possible. Now we aim to have a shorter service this morning so I had better get on with it lets feel the warmth of God's welcome to us all now...wherever we are

as we watch a video... & following that we are going to listen to the praise group as they have recorded the song... SILL MY SOUL..

Video- 'welcome back'

Praise Group - Still my soul

*Still my soul be still and do not fear
Though winds of change may rage tomorrow. God is at your side.
No longer dread, the fires of unexpected sorrow.
God you are my God & I will trust in You & not be shaken. Lord
of peace renew a steadfast spirit within me to rest in You alone.*

*Still my soul be still, do not be moved by lesser lights & fleeting
shadows. Hold onto His ways with shield of faith. Against
temptation's flaming arrows. CHORUS*

*Still my soul be still, do not forsake the truth you learned in the
beginning. Wait upon the Lord & hope will rise. As stars appear
when the day is dimming... I rest in You alone...In You alone.*

Prayer - Great & glorious God... God who is unshakable & unchanging... God who totally trustworthy ..God who is our protector & Saviour... God is at our side now.... we worship You alone... You are with us in our homes...& you are with us also in this building... Faithful God...we simply say that we love You & that we are thankful for your mercies to us...

Yet even as we worship you now... as we tell ourselves to be still & do not fear...we also confess our great need to You... Need for mercy..for forgiveness, for we do doubt at times...& we do fail to be the people that we know we should be... We also ask for your

renewing today... Renew us in FAITH HOPE & LOVE...that we might serve You & our neighbour better...

We each now bring our own prayers to God....

Still my soul be still and do not fear

Though winds of change may rage tomorrow. God is at your side.

Lord hold us tight now as we continue in worship... in Jesus name we pray. amen

Our Old Testament reading is taken from the book of Exodus.

Exodus 34:29-35

²⁹ When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. ³⁰ When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. ³² Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the LORD had given him on Mount Sinai.

³³ When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴ But whenever he entered the LORD's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, ³⁵ they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the LORD.

Giving thanks for the Collection

Help us to be generous givers, dear Lord, both of our money and our lives, that we might make a difference in this town. We ask this through your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave all that he was that we might know life in all its fullness. Amen.

New Testament Reading 2 Corinthians 3:12--18

¹² Since we have that kind of hope, we are very bold. ¹³ We are not like Moses. He used to cover his face with a veil. That was to keep the people of Israel from seeing the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴ But their minds were made stubborn. To this day, the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. The veil has not been removed. Only faith in Christ can take it away. ¹⁵ To this day, when the Law of Moses is read, a veil covers the minds of those who hear it. ¹⁶ But when anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Holy Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, freedom is also there. ¹⁸ None of our faces are covered with a veil. All of us can see the Lord's glory and think deeply about it. So we are being changed to become more like him so that we have more and more glory. And this glory comes from the Lord, who is the Holy Spirit.

SERMON "The intensity was incredible, each wave splashing millions of sparkles on to the beach. Wow, wow, wow!" Just this week people on Fountainstown beach in Cork were given a rare & exciting treat...for the waters were filled with Bioluminescent plankton.. leading to waves glowing a

wonderful blue like someone had put neon lights under them. Wouldn't you have liked to see that... I would, but maybe you can think back to other inspiring sights ... perhaps some of you have seen the Grand Canyon...or perhaps you have seen the Northern Lights... Nature can treat us to sights that make us go... WOW WOW WOW...

BUT then there is even more... for there is the ONE who made nature... the one who is even beyond WOW... When we read the scriptures we discover that many times when people came into contact with God they were left speechless, bowed low with the weight of the Lord's Holy awesome presence.. like Isaiah in Chp 6 or John as fell at the feet of 'one like the Son of Man' in the book or Rev 1:17

God's awesome presence, the closeness of God's glory.. that's what Moses sought & was granted... In our OT passage we hear of how Moses' face literally shone as he came back down Mt Sinai after meeting with God in an intense way.. YES being with God for that time left its mark on Moses.... his face glowed like the waves on that Cork beach... In fact Moses face was so radiant that the people were initially afraid of coming close to him... & Moses had to call them over & presumably reassure them that it was still him & that he was ok... & then he went on to share with them the commands the LORD had given him on Mount Sinai.

Yes the mark of God's presence on Moses shining face led these stubborn wayward people... to listen to what Moses

had to say... the presence of God in someone's life often does that... people notice... '*there's something different about them*' they say... there's a peace.. an assurance... a something that is different.... yes people notice... But as we are told in our bible passages ...there was a problem. **You see Moses face didn't remain radiant...** that mark of God's presence on him...gradually faded.. & so as Paul in his letter to the Corinthians explains ... Moses used to cover his face with a veil. That was to keep the people of Israel from seeing the end of what was passing away

Yes it seems that Moses didn't want the people to see that visible sign of God's presence passing away...so he would veil his face as the radiance began to fade & then take off the veil as he went back to meet with God again later... Yes as strange as it might sound to us the picture seems to be of one where Moses was like a rechargeable light... time with God would leave its mark...he would reflect God's glory ..but that would after time begin to fade.. & then he would put a veil on so that the Israelites wouldn't see that fading...

Yes Moses had to wear a face covering says Paul.. to stop people seeing that visible passing of God's presence.. But Paul goes on... we NT believers in Jesus aren't in that same position ...No P says ..'None of our faces are covered with a veil. All of us can see the Lord's glory and think deeply about it. So we are being changed to become more like him so that we have more and more glory. Vs 18

Yes we live in a different time from Moses ...a time when Jesus through His perfect sacrifice on the cross has opened the way for us to DWELL in God's presence...to continually be recharged through communion with Him... Yes as we have discovered unlike Moses we don't need to go to a special place or building to meet with God we can meet with Him anywhere at anytime... so that we are being changed to become more like Him...so that we have more & more glory.. WOW

Yes today as we meet here for the first time in this way... **we MUST wear masks..** so that we protect each other...so that we do all we can to stop the spread of this awful virus that is strangling our society...our world & leading to such terrible loss of life **We must do our bit to protect everyone & encourage others to do the same** & for the moment that means Face coverings are necessary... So let me be clear about that...

Beacuse I don't want you to misunderstand me when I say that our faces ...or rather our lives .. shouldn't be covered because they should reflect the glory of God... of course I don't mean like those glowing waves in Cork... but rather as Jesus says in the sermon on the mount (mt5:16) **let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.**

Yes as I read these passages I couldn't help but ask myself... How is my face...MY LIFE doing in terms of reflecting God's glory? Do people notice a difference about me... do they think... that man has a certain quality peace..joy ...kindness... hope...something... that's different

something I desire... Yes these are challenging days... dark days... BUT as we heard in our opening song earlier... *stars appear when the day is dimming.* Yes we need God's light at this time..& any little light that we can shine for Him... will be all the more visible at this time of anxiety & uncertainty.

But perhaps some of us are wondering if we have a light to shine.. perhaps we are fearful or anxious ourselves... Well remember... when Jesus spoke of us shining for Him.. He was talking of us remaining connected to Him ...the original light source... So my 2nd & last question for myself & us this morning is this... Do we need recharged today..? Do we feel as if our light is waning....are we growing tired, feeling discouraged...I think so many people are.. **well then let's just pause now & ask God to touch us again with His presence...** we must keep on our face masks.... But let's take off our HEART MASK... let's just pause & listen for God's voice & quietly ask Him to helps us put off anything that's been keeping us from Him... & let's ask God to pour oil on our hearts... to fill us again with His Spirit... amen

Prayers for others..

Closing Hymn

Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us;
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your word,
Lord, and let there be light!*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance;
By the blood I may enter your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your word,
Lord, and let there be light!*

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness.
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your word,
Lord, and let there be light!*

Prayer- Lord help us to daily gaze on Your kingly brightness so our faces & lives display Your likeness... ever changing from glory to glory Lord God may our lives tell your story... Shine on us & help us to shine for You...

Let us all say the words of the grace together...

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God & the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all forevermore.