

Skene Parish Church – Service Sheet

Monday 18th September 2023

Please note that the office is closed today and will reopen on Wednesday. Look out for details about Blythswood’s annual Shoebox Appeal.



“Since our first Shoe Box Appeal in 1993 we have sent more than 2.5 million boxes – each one different, each one personal, each one an expression of your care and kindness towards a stranger in need. Filled with small, practical items such as toiletries, stationery, and clothing, the individually-wrapped boxes have been distributed in schools, hospitals, orphanages and care homes, and to households in very low income communities. Many have gone to people affected by the war in Ukraine.

*Thank you for your kindness and generosity.
Your gift truly makes a difference.”*

Opening Prayer

*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,
the power and the glory, forever ... Amen.*

Call to Worship (Psalm 95)

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

Monday 18 th	Tuesday 19 th	Wednesday 20 th	Thursday 21 st	Friday 22 nd
490 Jesus, lover of my soul	489 Come down, O love divine	552 O for a closer walk with God	396 And can it be	399 My song is love unknown
Nailed to the cross, Rend Collective - https://youtu.be/GFLk6v7US3I?si=oSWmJUeUpINDEucq His mercy is more, Shane & Shane - https://youtu.be/uBZk0bVjCAA?si=F86M792UEfEsYDm6				

God’s Word

Monday 18 th	Tuesday 19 th	Wednesday 20 th	Thursday 21 st	Friday 22 nd
1 Corinthians 6:12-20	1 Corinthians 7:1-9	1 Corinthians 7:10-16	1 Corinthians 7:17-24	1 Corinthians 7:25-40

Reflection by Rev Stella

“You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.”

Alongside pride, it is fair to say that there are issues around how the Christians in Corinth are conducting themselves when it came to relationships and sex. Some were following a pattern of ‘anything goes’ – believing that because sin can be forgiven it doesn’t really matter what you get up to. We see arrogance creeping in with the statement, “I have the right to do anything.”

The church has long debated sexual ethics and it will continue to do so. When you read chapter 7, note that Paul tries to distinguish between his own advice, and what he believes is from the Lord. He’s doing his best to steer them in the right direction, as they negotiate the different kinds of situations they find themselves in – single, engaged, married, divorced, widowed etc, etc. I think you can tell from Paul’s writing that these are not easy topics for him to comment on. And we may find the content challenging – regardless of our age and stage. You may have already

decided you don't want to read any more this week, because in polite society, we don't talk about these things.

But there is a principle that he lays out at the end of chapter 6, which I think is helpful for us to carry with us. And that is – our bodies are not ours to do with as we please.

Even before we get to what Paul writes, as Christians, we believe that God has made us. We belong to Him. If we had a maker's stamp or seal on us, it would read the Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth (and all things in them).

But what Paul writes takes this thought further. We do not belong to ourselves because Jesus died on the cross for us – purchasing our rescue – buying our lives at a price – the ultimate price. He dies as a ransom for many.



And when we accept that truth, when we call upon Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, he comes to dwell in us by his Spirit. We are temples of the Holy Spirit. God makes His home in us. He no longer dwells in the temple in the Jerusalem – He dwells in his people.

Paul lingers on this thought in ways we might find uncomfortable and certainly thought-provoking.

So often when someone says their body is a temple, they don't mean it in the way Paul does. It's much more to do with healthy living and eating.

But if our bodies really are to be temples of the Holy Spirit, then how we treat our bodies and how we treat the bodies of other people, is important. If we long to welcome in more of God in our lives, then we must ask the question – are we making the space habitable for Him? Are we looking after our bodies in ways that are honouring to God? Are we surrendering them to Him - alongside our hearts, our spirits, our minds?

One final thought. It is important to remember that God's love, mercy, grace and forgiveness, cover every kind of sin. All we have to do, is bring it to the Lord in prayer. And then let it go. For you have been bought at a price – and that price pays it all. So if you find this week's readings difficult or unsettling, take it to the Lord in prayer. He is ready and able to bring peace.

"Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD.

"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

Isaiah 1:18

Prayer by Rev Kenneth Walker

God our Father, we are sorry that we become so engrossed with ourselves and our worldly matters. We do not give time to consider why you made us who we are and placed us where we are. Sometimes we feel that our affairs are too trivial to bring before you. We believe we can manage life by ourselves. Yet we realise that we are part of your kingdom; that you created us and have a purpose for us. Forgive our self-centredness, and give us a wider vision, so that in you we may find our true selves and the reason for our being. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Benediction – Romans 15:13

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The blessings of God the Father Son and Holy Spirit remain with you all your loved ones.

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