

# 12 Mar 2023

## **Worship Sheet for Sunday 12 March      No qualifications necessary**

We live in an age of form filling, templates and detailed job descriptions. There needs to be some of that even within the Church. We make a big mistake though if we put obstacles in the way of people following Jesus because none of us are “qualified” in ourselves to be Christians. It is all of grace in and through Jesus. Let’s watch we don’t substitute that.

Call: Leader: This is God’s house, All: God bids us all welcome. Leader: These are God’s people, All: God bids us all welcome. Leader: With empty hands and full hearts we come, All: God bids us all welcome.

Pray : Lord, you have set us amid the beauty of your creation. We live in a lovely part of the world. From the mountains to the sea we haven’t far to go to admire the scenery. Give us eyes to see the beauty of nature on our doorstep. Instead of rushing past, to take a moment to stop and gaze, take in the sights and enjoy the views, to admire all around us. And help us to sense the spiritual too; to appreciate the “hand that made us”, to recognise your grace and mercy in your creation, to give you the praise and glory that you deserve – and in the words of the hymn to use our “lips that we might tell how great is God Almighty who has made all things well.” Lord, help us to admire your creation, to care for it, and to enjoy it BUT not to see that as an end in itself, however worthy a cause but to allow your creation to point us, to draw us to worship and praise you not only as our Creator but as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Draw near to us in love today – may we know the presence and power of our risen Saviour, your Son Jesus Christ. Touch all our hearts with your blessing and may we know your forgiveness and grace. Be present, we pray, with all those who are unable to be with us – join them with us in the fellowship of your Son and empower us all by your Holy Spirit to worship you in spirit and in truth and to live in your service. These prayers we offer in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray together saying: Our Father...

Reading 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.      Not many wise by human standards.

Thought Do we put hurdles in the way of people responding to Jesus? Hopefully, not intentionally but there are all sorts of assumptions that we and others might make which distort the simple truth of the good news. For example, do we put too much emphasis on reading, thinking, speaking that those who find these things difficult or aren’t comfortable with them that they become hurdles to faith. Or do we dress, work or live in a way that distances them from Jesus? Paul comments that the Christians in Corinth didn’t have a lot going for them in worldly terms – few of them were well off, few were educated, few had any standing in the community. Yet, God was with them and enabled them to stand firm for Jesus in a rather hostile environment for faith. As well as unwittingly hindering people from properly engaging with Jesus, such attitudes can hinder our sisters and brothers from contemplating service for Jesus. We don’t have the qualifications or the experience; I’m no use at public speaking; my temperament isn’t suited to being an upfront person. Jesus doesn’t want us to be forced into a set mould. He has made us to be different in order to reach a wider audience. It may well be that someone who isn’t confident in being upfront may be the very person to get alongside someone who is shy and reticent! My granda used to say that he was “nae eese ava” (no use at all) – which wasn’t true but from childhood had got the impression that his education didn’t fit him for lots of tasks. We need to open things up – make sure that no one feels excluded or useless – God equips us all to play our (varied) parts.

Praise CH4 397      In the cross of Christ I glory.

Pray We applaud and comment favourably on the wild landscapes of some of our native lands – even in Angus. There’s many a soul who has said they feel closer to you, Lord in those parts – away from the hustle and bustle of noisy towns and endless demands on our time and attention. Was that why Jesus retreated into the wilderness – to seek peace and quiet, to listen more clearly to you, to sense your will and purpose and to receive affirmation and encouragement for the difficult road that lay ahead of him? Is that we should be doing

more of – whether up in the hills and glens or in the stillness of the moments nearer home? We pray for those who need peace and quiet – who need strength and patience – amid the trying times of family life, overly pressured job, stresses and strains among friends, with the church. We pray for us to be more open to give and receive affirmation and encouragement in our every day living and especially as we seek to live for Jesus and be salt and light in our community. We pray for those whose lives are fraught with danger – not only the victims of terrorism and tragedy which hits the headlines but the victims of greed, violence and manipulation the world over – and yes, locally too. We pray for those who more than most are feeling things are getting on top of them, that they simply can't cope. Open us up to one another that these concerns can be shared and talked about. Maybe not a problem shared, a problem halved but still an opportunity for exploring solutions and supporting one another while we do. Give grace, compassion and understanding to all those in positions of authority, whose decisions impact, sometimes greatly and adversely, on others that they may remember that their calls affect real people – people with families, with feelings, people who matter – people you love. We pray for all who could do with affirmation and encouragement just now. May we be more sensitive to that and seek it from you to pass on as well as for ourselves. In our prayer walk we pray for those who live or work in Wm Phillips Drive and Wm Rodger Drive. SILENCE. Affirming and encouraging God, hear and answer our prayers, spoken and silent, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Blessing      May the Lord bless you. Amen.

#### Notices

- Thanks to all who supported the coffee morning last Saturday. £437 was raised for the youth work of the Church.
- Sunday 12 March – Messy Church 4pm -5.30pm in the halls.

To assist those unable to access material via the internet we have established a phone line where people can phone in to hear the mini service or sermon.

**01674 902624.**

To hear the mini service people just need to dial in and wait. To hear the sermon, after dialling you need to press 1 then #. In either case there is a few seconds delay while the message loads so tell folk not to hang up! If folk press 1 for the sermon before the intro finishes the system doesn't pick up on it and it defaults to the mini service. The message now says wait until after the tone before pressing 1 but give it a few seconds after that and do press # after pressing 1.

Sermon, prayers and news (or links to them) will be uploaded to our website [www.oldandstandrews.com](http://www.oldandstandrews.com) and the Old and St Andrew's Facebook page. Feel free to copy this and pass it on to Church members or friends who might not use the web or social media

Please continue to pray for one another and support where you can and remember that the congregation is united in love wherever we are and however we are worshipping.

**Stay safe! May the Lord bless you!**

Ian

*Rev Dr Ian A McLean*