

12 Sep 2021

Worship Sheet for Sunday 12 September Words and silence

Watch your mouth! James comments on bad language but also warns against other damage that can be done by what comes out of our mouths. Too easily something is said that hurts others, spoils relationships or worse. And it can't be unsaid. While the warning is especially directed those who have particular influence with their words, it applies to us all. And we need to watch that silence isn't an excuse of evading our responsibilities to speak up for justice.

Call: Brothers, sisters, those who have it together, those who are ragged at the edges, those who are perfect, those who feel a bit chipped, those who know when to stay quiet, those whose tongues run away with them, know that all are welcome. God's delights that you are here. Come, as we worship together.

Pray Loving God, you speak to us through the wonder of your creation and more clearly in the word of life you dear Son. Thank you for the gift of speech – for the ability to share the good news of your love and to express it. Forgive us for the times we have been lax in our speech and failed to show consideration for others, when we have caused hurt by thoughtlessness even by design; for the times we have sought to use speech as power and for the times we have kept silent in face of injustice. Work in our hearts and minds, help us to use our words to deepen relationship and foster love for the sake of Jesus who taught us to pray together saying Our Father...

Reading James 3:1-12 The tongue.

Thought Watch your mouth! That can be a warning against bad language but actually James expresses much more wide ranging concerns about how we speak. Like toothpaste – once our words are out you can't put them back – and all sorts of damage can be done – hurt, broken relationships – and maybe worse esp with social media. Fake news, trolling and manipulative use of speech – almost as a weapon can wreak havoc. And those in the public eye need to be particularly careful. We need to watch what we say and think of its impact. We need to question others' speech and ensure that we, and they, are using words that foster truth, goodness and right living. As a small rudder can steer a large ship easily into or out of danger so our tongues can all too easily lead us into trouble or with grace into love. We need God's help so that we can use his gift of speech to advance the good news rather than detract from it. Listening rather than always rushing to speak helps. [pause] Silence doesn't necessarily mean that there is a fault! On the other hand we mustn't be silent when injustice is calling us to speak out for justice. Words and silence both have their place. We need God's grace to use them to good effect.

Praise CH4 622 We sing a love that sets all people free. v 1,2 3 & 5.

Pray O God, you search us and you know us, we are frail and simple beings, often foolish and forgetful. We thank you for the gift gifts of wisdom and truth, made known to us through your word. We bring our words, for ourselves and for our world, near and far. We thank you for your written word, and for all who helped write and translate and commentate upon it, for all who read it and all who preach from it. We pray for the people who try to live daily by your word, for all who live out its life-giving call to serve in love, caring for self and neighbour. We pray for all the people who seek your word, in scripture, religion and nature, may they be blessed in their search and come to know you more fully. We pray for people who find words are used like weapons against them, who have wounds from years of listening to hateful, abusive language used to hurt and isolate them. Lord in your mercy, may they hear your loving word today. Lord, may our words speak lovingly and wisely always.

Show us, not just our leaders and others in the public eye how to use speaking and listening in ways that help others to experience your acceptance and love. May the way we listen to you and to others help us shape our lives so that they more truly reflect the grace of Jesus and encourage people to know him and love him. While we may need to be silent sometimes, may we always be ready to speak up and act for justice. We remember in our prayers all those whose hearts are heavy and whose lives are weighed down with burdens – may they hear words of comfort from us and from you and may these be accompanied by tangible signs of love and kindness. In our prayer walk this week we pray for those who live or work in North Esk Road.

SILENCE Lord hear our prayers spoken and unspoken and answer them for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen Blessing May the Lord bless you. Amen.

Notices

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 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

We are awaiting revised guidance both from the government and the Church. Representations have been made to try to remove some of the inconsistencies in regulation that has required us to adopt more stringent measures in church from cafés and other settings. We must continue to be careful as the virus is still circulating but we will keep an eye on changes in regulation and guidance and then consider what steps would be reasonable in our setting. There is plenty of room now to come to Church and if you feel safer being at a greater distance than most then we can respect that too. At the time of writing we are still required to keep trace and track details so please do still phone in advance. Even when we come to the point of being allowed to sit without masks there is nothing wrong with wearing them!

If you are thinking of coming please phone Thelma Robb 672263 or Willie Sinclair during the week prior to a particular Sunday on 675671 so that we have contact details for trace and protect.

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