

## Worship at Home—Sunday 3 October 2021

### Call to Worship

O Lord, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars that you have established;  
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,  
mortals that you care for them?  
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,  
and crowned them with glory and honour  
O Lord, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
(adapted from Psalm 8)

### Opening Prayer

A Modern Day PSALM written by Rev Jenny Adams

Hear our cry, O God,  
listen to our prayers.  
The world is wounded  
by coronavirus,  
by isolation,  
and by inequalities made worse by the pandemic.

There is so much injustice, God,  
with people excluded because of skin colour, gender, and debt,  
and harmed by violence, wealth and climate crisis  
here, nationally and across Your world.

Creation herself groans,  
crying out to You in brokenness.  
And while we cry out,  
the injustices and inequalities go on,  
against Your will, O God,  
though, we confess, not always against our own interests.

Yet in our losses and failures,  
we know we can cry to You,  
and that You listen to us and love us.  
We know that You promise to be with us always,



A memorial Service for  
the late  
Professor Ian George  
Stewart,  
Professor of Economics  
at the University of  
Edinburgh will be held  
in Currie Kirk on  
Thursday 7 October at  
3 pm

and that You are beside us in all the mess.  
We know we can pray for Your ways to come,  
and that You invite us to join You in changing the world.

You are a faithful God,  
walking with us through 2020 and 2021,  
as You have walked with people for millennia.  
So in our woundedness, we trust in You for healing.  
In our unjust behaviours, we turn to You for transformation.  
In our uncertainty, we seek Your presence to guide us to new life.

For all this we give thanks for You:  
God of love, God with us, God of life,  
thank You.

And may we hear Your call, O God,  
to seek peace and justice,  
to love tenderly and fairly,  
and to listen and learn humbly  
for ourselves and our communities,  
for all people and Your whole creation.

May we hear Your call, O God,  
and respond with all that we have and all that we are,  
being transformed  
and so helping change the world.

**AMEN**

## **The Scriptures**

### **1st Chronicles: 16: 29-36**

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
bring an offering and come before him.  
Worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness.  
Tremble before him, all the earth!  
The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;  
let them say among the nations,  
"The LORD reigns!"

Let the sea resound, and all that is in it;  
let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them!  
Let the trees of the forest sing,  
let them sing for joy before the LORD,  
for he comes to judge the earth.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.  
Cry out, "Save us, God our Saviour;  
gather us and deliver us from the nations,  
that we may give thanks to your holy name,  
that we may glory in your praise."  
Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel,  
from everlasting to everlasting.

Then all the people said "Amen" and "Praise the LORD.

## **Revelation 3:14-17**

### **To the Church in Laodicea**

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

## **Sermon**

### **The true meaning of Amen "Let the Amen sound forth!"**

When we worship every week and every time we pray, we use a little word Amen. Often that word is said at least ten times in a Sunday service without anyone paying attention to what it means.

When I was in Seminary, we would be assigned to different church placements to help out with their worship. One year I was working a few hours per week with Oaklane Presbyterian Church in downtown Philadelphia. This was a very happy interracial church with a fair proportion of strong black women—and I soon learned that they were not passive when worshiping God. If I said something that resonated with them, they would say, "Amen" and continually throughout my sermon they would hopefully say, "Amen!" but I soon learned that when I wasn't preaching at my best these same black women would be praying for me by saying out loud, "Help her Lord, Just Help her Lord!"

I preferred it when they just said their "Amen!" It was like having someone root for you at the side of the road when you are running a race.

The word Amen, like the words Hallelujah or Hosanna belongs to a group of Aramaic words which have been left untranslated in our Bible. The word Amen is derived from a verb which means, "to support, or "to make firm" and so it really means "firmly," "truly" or "surely." It is, in some small way a moment to entrust to God everything that has been offered up in prayer or song and in that trust, assuming that everything is going to be all right. Maybe not everything will be exactly ok as we hope, but it will be all right.

Recently I listened to a documentary about Angela Merkle, the former Chancellor of Germany. She made mistakes. She had detractors. She did not always get things right. But she was a leader with compassion, values, integrity and a great deal of love towards all people, including refugees. Those who supported her and those who didn't are mourning her retiral because she did this one thing. She led in such a way that they felt that they were in the safe hands of a good mother-figure who cared about them. And she did care. And she somehow got them through many crises and helped them to believe that they were going to be ok. I loved thinking about that style of leadership. If the people of Germany could trust Angela Merkle to enable them to trust that they were going to be ok. How much more can we trust our Father God to be with us and help us. Amen to that!

So, we do the word Amen a disservice if we just say it as a means of signing off. There is a story of a senior partner in a law-firm who was also a church elder and lay preacher. He worked for a well-known firm called McLure, Naismith and Brodie. Once when he was offering up a lengthy prayer without notes he accidentally finished the prayer with Yours, Mclure, Naismith and Brodie!.

This little word, which is known in every language around the world has a deep religious significance. In the Old Testament, "Amen" was used for making your own, or adopting as your own, something that had just been said by somebody else. It was a way of showing agreement and approval. For instance, when King David brought the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem, he ordered the choir to sing a Psalm of thanksgiving and when the people heard it they all said, "Amen" and they praised the Lord. (1 Chronicles 16 verse 36).

Everyone together was caught up in a moment of charged enthusiasm, a great desire to affirm this blessing and give praise and thanks to God. And so to say Amen together was an act of solidarity, community and praise.

In the ancient city of Alexandria, the response of 'Amen' was considered so important that just in case the people at the back could not hear the prayer or the sermon, a flag would be raised to notify the whole congregation when to say Amen together. It was like an exercise in blind faith in the words of the preacher. They didn't know what they were saying Amen to.

As the early church came into being, it became a practice for a group of Christians to say Amen in response to every petition of prayer—and that has continued from informal house churches to high Roman Catholic liturgies. In 2 Corinthians 1, Saint Paul, when preaching the Good News of Christ said, "All the promises of God find their Yes in Him. That is why we utter the Amen through him, to the glory of God." (2 Corinthians 1: 20)

The scholar Joachim Jeremias was a Lutheran scholar who studied the ancient Aramaic Greek language used by Jesus. He pointed out that in the New Testament, there are two important uses of the word, Amen. The first is the fact that Jesus himself used this word. In the Gospels we often read statements like, "truly, truly I say unto you," but in the original language, this was actually, "Amen, Amen, I say unto you." This was a way of saying, "I want you to pay attention to this." most solemnly declare unto you this truth—you can trust what I am about to say. Joachim Jeremias asserts that this was a very special and personal characteristic of Jesus' speech.

We wonder would it not be great in our time of fake news, crazy social media and a lot of conspiracy theories to be able to look at our leaders and know that they said, "Amen, Amen I say unto you," we could truly trust them to be sharing the truth.

He pointed out that the second new use of the word Amen is found in the Book of Revelation Chapter 3. Here Christ himself is given the title of Amen. This may sound rather strange. But in this way the use of Amen is an emphasis upon Christ as the guarantee that all the promises of God's love are fulfilled in the very person of Jesus. The words in Revelation 3 verse 14 read, "The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

Christ, God's true and reliable Amen is proof that God is present in the world because he came from God. We can rely on his words because he, himself is the Amen—the fulfilment of all human hope and prayer and faith. The fulfilment of God's will for humanity.

Many of us have learned to assume that the word Amen is the end. The end of the prayer, the end of the doxology or the blessing or the sermon. It is like a punctuation mark, a full stop, an exclamation mark. But the word Amen is not the end of a prayer. Indeed, it suggests that there is something that has to be carried out. Like a bridge connecting our prayer with the world and with God.

So, Amen is not an ending word. It is a follow-through word. I recently watched some of the Ryder cup. (well it was on tv as Darren was watching). The golfer's swing doesn't stop when the club hits the ball. The golfer has to complete the swing, or the ball could go in any direction. SO it is when we say Amen. There is something we need to complete, some prayer participation. We are aware that in all prayer there is often the need for surrender to God but also participation and action.

This past weekend, our Harvest National Giving weekend was a prime example of how prayer came together with community and effort and love. Everywhere around us, in every street or community, there are people whose life is difficult, who suffer from poverty financially or spiritually or emotionally. This is evidenced by the reliance on food projects. The ongoing statistics of drug related deaths in Scotland. The reported fear and anxiety of teenagers and adults alike.

Prayer is such a key part of our life as people of faith. Indeed, it is crucial to our purpose and wellbeing and if we are to work towards the "salvation" of individuals, saving them not only from a life of hunger, disease, ostracization, loneliness or any other form of a poverty of spirit.

If God hears our prayers and acts upon our deepest spiritual yearnings and indeed helps us enter into that spiritual dimension where the Holy Spirit is praying through us and helping us to fulfil the purposes of God, all I can say is Amen to that!

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession—Krys Hume**

Father, we thank you for the good news of Christ.

Each day is filled with bad news of the way we treat each other and your creation. We rejoice to be hearers and bearers of the **good** news that Christ came, lived, died and was raised again, as the sign that we can be forgiven, and our lives made new.

We thank you that this good news has been told all around the world, and that wherever it has been proclaimed people's lives have been made new. We thank you for the church worldwide, and for all those who minister and preach your word, wherever they are.

We especially thank you for the church here in Currie, as it impacts on our daily lives, and through us, on the lives of others. We are the stewards of your church here in Currie. May we grasp every opportunity to be faithful to your command to be witnesses for Christ and move us to be generous with our time, with our love, with our actions and with our money, remembering that Christ was much more than generous—he gave up his life for us.

As we pray for others, let us remember those who have little or nothing, especially as a result of Covid. Give them a sufficiency to enable them to live their lives.

We pray too for those who have an abundance of wealth and worldly goods, on which they have set their hearts, but have nothing that ultimately matters. Give them the wisdom to discern what is important, that it is Christ and his way that makes life worth living.

Father, we think of all those who have power or authority of any kind over others—politicians, officials, leaders, employers, teachers, parents, and any others. Give them a sense of responsibility and rightness so that they act wisely and kindly at all times.

Father, we pray for people affected by natural disasters; Crete with its earthquake and Hawaii and La Palma where volcanoes are erupting and lava is covering increasing tracts of land, endangering both people and their houses. Be with all who are involved, sufferers and helpers, and we ask for your care and blessing on them.

Father, we pray too for all those affected by the troubles in Afghanistan, those who have escaped, but especially those who are still there. We ask for your help in resolving the situation as fast as possible, and with minimum suffering and loss of life.

Father, we pray for those affected by Covid in any way; for those who endure hurt and pain; for those facing operations and long-term sickness; for those caring for the sick and dying; for the elderly and ill and those who look after them. Give them strength and courage to face the future, knowing that your loving presence is always with them.

We pray for our friends and neighbours; for those we work and play with, and for members of our own family, wherever they are. Bless them, and look after them, so that their lives may be enriched by your spirit.

And now as we approach the end of our worship, send us out in the name of Christ; fill us with your love and mercy. By your holy spirit, enable us so to live and so to speak, that your love and joy may flow into every corner of life.

We go in your name.

We go in your love.

We go with your spirit, for the glory of your name.

AMEN

## National Giving Weekend

Thank you to everyone who helped or came along to our Harvest celebration weekend. It was a great weekend! The sound of laughter on Saturday morning was great to hear and the magician Tricky Ricky was amazing. He kept the adults as well as the children enthralled with his magic.

Saturday afternoon's entertainment and tea were excellent. The Community choir sang their hearts out and who knew Ronnie Moyes was such a talented comedian!

The MOF committee had made the decision that the weekend was to be more than just the money—our halls are now open, we had plenty of fellowship and it was lovely to see so many families in the morning.

Sunday was our Harvest Thanksgiving service where all the donations went to the Currie Community Foodbank; and the Kirk was open for tours (led by Louise) in the afternoon.

The total so far from all the donations amounts to over £11,000.

Totally amazing amount.... and I'm sure there will be a few more donations to come.

Thanks again, Fiona Pigott (Chair of Mission, Outreach and Fellowship)

## 2021 Shoebox Appeal.

We are going ahead with our annual Shoebox project which brings joy to many in need at Christmas throughout Eastern Europe. Similar to last year, if you do not have a box then a shoe bag can be used (12" by 15"). If you'd like a leaflet there are some outside the office, some in the Gibson Craig Halls, contact Nina in the office or any member of MOF—Heather Merriman, Viola MacPhail, Christine Wilson, June Deuchars, John Macaulay, Hamish Leal, Catherine Clephane, or Shona Moyes.

The essential items are toothbrush and toothpaste, underwear, soap, sweets, toy/gift, scarf, hat and gloves. Other items can be added to complete the box/bag depending on who you choose to complete the gifts for.

Please remember to wrap the lid and the box separately to allow Customs to make any necessary checks. The deadline for handing these boxes in is **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October**. Please contact any of the above people if you are unable to hand in to the office.

Thanks, Fiona Pigott

**FreshStart**  
helping people make a home for themselves

We are collecting items once again  
Dishes and Cutlery  
Tea towels and cleaning materials.

Pots, pans and utensils

Curtains, bed linen and Towels

**No duvets , cups and saucers or bric-a-brac please.**

I can pick items up from your home or you can take them to the Gibson Craig .

Please contact me Christine Wilson 538 2567 or Nina 451 5141 to arrange.



The next meeting of the Guild will be on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October at 10am when we will have a talk from Simon Fairlie on “Fisherrow Fisherwomen”. All are welcome to attend whether members or not. Social distancing will be in place and masks must be worn.

If you require any further information, please contact me on 0131-466-3472 or email [elf.lamont@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:elf.lamont@blueyonder.co.uk)

Louise Lamont Guild President

## Pat Jones

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the death of Pat Jones who died on the 22 December 2020. Pat left a wonderful legacy in Currie being part of the founding members of the Pentland Valley Players and taking part in its first production—Fidler on the Roof. Pat loved her theatricals.

Willis and Pat will be remembered in Currie for many years.

## NO BOOKING REQUIRED FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP

### LOOKING FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU ON SUNDAY

Current regulations require:

- ◆ face masks must still be worn.
- ◆ worship still requires that we stick to the one-metre social distance rule.
- ◆ There will be sanitizing stations.

## SUNDAY SERMON SHEETS

Please note that as from Sunday 17 October the Sermon Sheets will no longer be produced.

The Service will be available on YouTube.

If you are unable to access YouTube please contact Nina who will arrange for a CD tape to be delivered.

## Kirk Contacts

Minister: Rev Dr Easter Smart—Tel: 449 4719 email: [esmart@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:esmart@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Family worker: Heather Merriman email: [Familyworker\\_JVP@outlook.com](mailto:Familyworker_JVP@outlook.com)

Pastoral Coordinator: Gordon Clephane—449 2313

Nina at the Kirk Office—451 5141

email [currie\\_kirk@btconnect.com](mailto:currie_kirk@btconnect.com) if you need anything.

Website: [//www.curriekirk.org/](http://www.curriekirk.org/) or [//www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/](https://www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/)

All sermons from Currie Kirk can be found on the Kirk’s website and on YouTube—search Currie Kirk