

# REEMERGING TOGETHER AGAIN!

21<sup>st</sup> March 2021 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent



MAY THE STORY OF ST. PATRICK INSPIRE US ALL TO PRESENT A FRESH OFFERING OF COMMITMENT TO GOD SO THAT WE CAN BUILD A SPIRITUAL TABERNACLE OF DEVOTION TOGETHER

## READINGS:

LUKE CH19 V18-27

PETER'S CONFESSION

EXODUS CH38 V21-31

TABERNACLE MATERIALS



## PRAYERS

A Prayer of St. Patrick: ***'Father, I arise today through the strength of heaven; Light of the sun, Splendour of fire, Speed of lightning, Swiftmess of the wind, Depth of the sea, Stability of the earth, Firmness of the rock. I arise today'***  
*'Lord God help us to come to you with the same awe and devotion that Patrick's prayer displays, accept our prayers of praise, confession and those we lift for the sake of others, forgive, help, encourage and bless us we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen'*

◆ Take a moment to pray for all those affected by coronavirus in whatever way, the NHS and frontline workers, the world and church near and far- lift to God the people and places that lie heavy upon your heart

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*"Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvellous deeds among all peoples."*

*1 Chronicles ch16 v24*

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## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY

### **Three Shamrocks!**

Many people celebrate St. Patrick's Day but don't why Patrick is so important. He was born in Scotland (probably) and at the age of 16 he was kidnapped by Irish pirates and made a slave for six years before he had a dream that helped him to escape, he made it back home again but never forgot his time in Ireland. His faith in Jesus became much stronger and he came back to Ireland to tell people about Jesus. It is said he used the shamrock to teach people about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that he chased all the snakes out of Ireland- however he didn't really chase snakes, what that means is that he hunted out badness by sharing the Gospel all around. He was a simple man who God used to bring lots of people to Jesus and helped the church to

grow not only in Ireland but all over the world as in the years to come people from Ireland went all around the globe sharing the Gospel. ◆ Draw out three shamrocks- on the **first one draw on each leaf something about Patrick's early life**, maybe his capture, slavery and escape- on the **second draw on each leaf a picture of how the shamrock can remind us of the nature of God**, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit: maybe draw a crown, a cross and a dove- on the **third draw on each leaf a picture of what Patrick did in Ireland**, maybe snakes, churches and the world: showing how far his ministry reached. Hopefully our three shamrocks will remind us of Patrick and how God still uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things, and that there is nothing more wonderful than people coming to know Jesus. Pray: ***'Father, thank you for your servant Patrick, may we remember the great things you did through him, help us to love and serve Jesus too so more people will come to trust and follow him. Amen'***



## DEVOTIONAL

### ***Materials of the heart***

***'I am certain in my heart that all that I am, I have received from God.'*** St. Patrick writes out of deep and enduring gratitude to God of all he had done for and given to him. This gratitude cultivated a strong and determined sense of mission and purpose, that shaped his identity, he lived for Christ and he gave of himself so that others would come to do likewise.

This manifested itself in a life of prayer and devotion to God, a life of commitment and endurance, a life where he gave the best of himself in service.

We can see a clear link when we examine the record of the Tabernacle materials. God had spoken to Moses and given detailed instructions and now we witness them being carried out. What is amazing to observe is the amount of precious material given up by the people to see the Tabernacle constructed. With regard to the silver, for example, they collected 100 talents of silver for the bases.

Throughout the process, God's commands are specific, the instructions were given in a precise manner and they were expected to be precisely obeyed. What is central is that God didn't only provide specific directions, he also provided the means. All of Israel's treasures were provided by God, and now the command is for them to give up an offering of the same for the building of the Tabernacle. They are asked to remember that what, where and who they are, and what they have, are all due to the graciousness of God and therefore giving for the sake of constructing the Tabernacle was an opportunity to display their hearts of thankfulness. As Patrick would later write: ***'I am certain in my heart that all that I am, I have received from God.'***

Building the Tabernacle required the Israelites to give the best of themselves to God, not only would the offering of these precious materials display that but the end result of the erected structure would serve as a continual reminder of God as the source of goodness and blessing and that he is due unparalleled obedience and devotion. Consider also the intangible cost of this exercise, what would it have meant for the people to build the Tabernacle? Not only the giving of material, there was a real sacrifice of plans, of life ambition, and of time. These are things they had to give up so that they could worship, build and obey.

We are called to do similarly, that's why Jesus calls his people take up their cross and follow him. Trusting in and serving Jesus is not always easy, it might cost us relationships with friends or family, it might cost us certain things they we would like to do or experience, and it ought to cost us some of the luxuries that we have become so accustomed to in life.

The problem is that so many of us have forgotten this, Jesus and our faith in him is a side addition to our daily lives, our devotion to him too easily squeezed out and moved down the agenda. While it is wonderful that we are beginning to see restrictions lifted and things moving towards opening up, we are afforded with an opportunity but presented with a real challenge. We, hopefully before too long, will be able to do many of the things we have missed and as the church we can all get back out into the world to live out our faith as we ought, yet we could also be very easily lead astray as old habits and busyness begins to build again. As a church family, and as individual members, we must take time to reflect upon our personal devotion to Christ and look at how we live for him, what did we do before that we need to give up, things that aren't bad in themselves but indirectly get in the way of our mission and purpose- to do as Patrick did, live for Christ and give of ourselves so that others would come to do likewise. What new habits or actions might we need to see that realised more fully, can we do *'less better'* and be more deliberate in our lives of obedience and faith? Now is the time to give to God those offerings of devotion and commitment so that together we can see a spiritual Tabernacle built that will remind us, that in Christ, in the coming days- Patrick's identity in God, motivation to serve and words to live by, are ours also: ***'I am certain in my heart that all that I am, I have received from God.'***

***Take my life and let it be  
all Your purpose, Lord, for me;  
consecrate my passing days,  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.***

***Take my motives and my will,  
all Your purpose to fulfil;  
take my heart — it is Your own,  
it shall be Your royal throne.***

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### REEMERGING TOGETHER AGAIN!

An update, like this one, will be emailed out each Friday and delivered to folk who don't have internet connection or an easy way of accessing it. Please feel free to share around!

### 'PREACHING TO THE CHOIR'

Each Thursday evening at 6:30pm, while we are closed for services, we will upload a recording of a little midweek- '*Preaching to the Choir*'. This will include a few musical items, prayer, reading and devotion. This is not a replacement of our Sunday service, yet is accessed the same way via the website or YouTube, but an additional opportunity to share in for the next while.

### OPEN CHURCH

The church building is open for private prayer on Fridays 10am-12noon. There is also the facility to drop off offering envelopes.

### PRAYER LINK

While Morning Watch cannot meet at the moment the Prayer Link will still be circulated, if you have any prayer requests please pass them along and if you would like a copy of the Prayer Link emailed or delivered please ask

### ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

The Zoom Bible study meets on Monday evenings at 7pm, this season we are exploring the Gospel of Luke together, everyone is very welcome!

### BIBLE CLASS

Bible Class will continue on Zoom on Sunday mornings at 11:30am, all p7s and up are welcome- if there is anyone who hasn't joined in yet it would be great to have you, please get in touch.

### CHURCH FLOWERS

We would thank those members of the congregation who provide church flowers each Sunday. Unfortunately, since Sunday 10th January and until church services can resume church flowers are not required. We are aware that some of the flowers are in memory of a loved one or to mark an occasion, and this is regretted, but hopefully these dates can be honoured next year. As soon as we have a confirmed date when services can again be held a member of our Flower Arranging team will be in touch.

Church flowers on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March would have been:

(Pedestal) Mr & Mrs M Graham, Church Road, Moneyreagh

## COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

PCI has released the following statement to be shared with members:

*'The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) encourages all of its members to actively consider receiving vaccination against Covid-19 when it is offered to them. While recognising that this is ultimately a matter of personal judgement, PCI neither discourages its members from taking up the vaccine offer nor is it supportive of those who seek to discourage the take-up of the vaccine.'*

## RECOMMENCEMENT OF IN PERSON SERVICES OF WORSHIP

PCI have confirmed the date for the recommencement of in person services of worship as Good Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. More information will follow next week regarding the plans for beginning services again.

## MR BOBBY IRVINE

Given lockdown and the restrictions on the number able to attend Bobby's funeral we want to give the wider congregation the chance to contribute in Bobby's memory. Bobby was a great stalwart of Cregagh and was indeed close to all our hearts. Bobby's wider family have offered the opportunity for donations in his memory to be made to the Building Fund. If you have not contributed and would like to do so, please pass on your donation in the usual way, marking it appropriately as a contribution in Bobby's memory. Thank you.

## GET IN TOUCH

Please do not hesitate to get in touch:

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