

Ceres, Kemback & Springfield Parish Church

Sunday, 1st September 2024

Pentecost 15

Springfield Community Church

Call to Worship



Call To Worship

Let us bring our dreams
to the place they are honoured. Our longings
to the place they are held.
Our pain

to the place it is healed.
Our love
to the place where we are known.

Let us bring our journeys, our seeking,
our hopes
and our adventures

in truth,
in love,
in worship.

Hymn Jesus calls us here to meet him

Church & Community News

The Biblical Context

Our two readings this morning also point towards home ... in Jeremiah's letter to the Israelites exiled in Babylon he says - much I'm sure to their discomfort, look, settle in ... build houses and homes ... marry ... have children and become part of the new culture in which you find you find yourselves ...

This is a contemporary topic isn't it - the stuff of election wherein voters here in the UK and in November in the US and in other countries certainly Europe cast their votes sometimes on the single issue of migration .. there is hostility to people coming to live in another country and sometimes violence breaks out ... but here Jeremiah's telling the Israelites exiled

in another culture - God want you to not only remain here but become part of your new surroundings ... inter marry and grow newly constituted families

Then we have Paul writing arguably his most affectionate of the seven letters we have in the New Testament ... his expressions of affection and love to the church in Philippi are moving and the most strenuous of anything else he writes ... indeed he tells them that in straightened times when he's been far from home and hearth and all

the comforts and securities of these - their affection and encouragement sustained him so much that he calls them a gift from God ...

And both these letters - which come to us today as it happened on World Letter Writing Day have HOME in common - home as in the place where we feel comfortable, safe, surrounded by people and things that are fond and familiar ...

But of course there are many ways in which we can feel uncomfortable and unfamiliar - even when we're still at home ... unhappiness at home ... job dissatisfaction ... people we know unhappy and struggling ... our own situation might be strained by financial worries and family dissonance - ill health ...

In Jeremiah's letter he says that God will call the exiles home in 70 years - so the message is that even though they're far away, asked to stay there and settle, there will be a homecoming time ... but what does this actually mean? Remember the Hebrew numbering system casts the number 7 as pointing to perfection ... here he quotes 10 times that number ... but does this necessarily mean God will call them physically home to their geographical homeland?

Are we to take the number 70 literally, or is there a spiritual dimension to this symbolic numeral? Does it mean that if they settle, build their houses ... marry ... have family settle in the place they're in they will become more and more accepted by their new neighbours ... their lives will become more peaceable and familiar ... their children will grow in that place and experience it as home ... Babylon will become safe, familiar, hospitable and a good place to be ... Is this what perfection means after all? That human beings, given the face of God and infused with the love and glory of God can breach divides and enmities and live together as biblical lions and lambs?

Prayer Of Adoration And Confession

O God,
we rejoice in your care for us,
for the opportunity to
join together in worship
and share the stories of our faith.

We give thanks for the people
who took the time to record your stories in prose, poetry and letters
that we may savour the story,
learn of your actions
and continue to share Your love.

We rejoice in freedom of worship and freedom of movement, aware that it is a
privilege.

We choose to come together
to offer praise in hymns and prayers. We give you heartfelt thanks.

We are sorry that we often
take this opportunity for granted,
that we ignore the needs of others,
while focused on our own.

Forgive us, we pray.

Gracious God,
we are grateful for
a future with hope
given by the merciful forgiveness of our sins.
Give us the initiative
to share that hope
far and wide
in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn God is working his purpose out

Ceres Coffee & Chat



Liz and Alfie have run this warm and welcoming cafe in the Village Cafe in Ceres on behalf of the church since last October. The project began with part funding from Fife Council Warm Spaces last October '23 and when that tranche of funding ended the CKS Kirk Session agreed to fund it entirely until end December, '24. Liz and Alfie have brought their considerable pastoral and hospitality skills to the project and have welcomed a great many people and groups, some in need of a listening, kind ear and many who have simply been in search of a good cup of coffee ...

Above all, the aim of this project is to ensure a safe, warm, friendly haven for anyone who comes in - a church presence, a Christ-like presence grounded in community - in the very heart of the community. Finding a safe, confidence building place is the touchstone of our two Biblical readings today - and in C21st in CKS parish we have three such safe haven gong on: Springfield Coffee Club on Wednesday mornings, Ceres Coffee & Chat on Wednesdays in Ceres and RVS lunches in Springfield every Thursday.

Liz and Alfie's presentation can be watched and heard on our Facebook page and thanks to Caro for recording and posting ...

We offered our sincere thanks to them both and wished Alfie in particular well, as he heads off to a four-year teacher training degree and qualification to teach primary aged children.

We are extremely grateful that the Village Cafe assistance manager Liz McKenzie is now managing CCC, and we are looking for someone to assist her, to ensure health and safety regs are fulfilled.

With ominous warnings about heating costs rising by almost 10% this winter and many pensioners in particular affected by the cut to winter fuel payments, this project and local resource is a great presence in our parish. We are also extremely grateful to Karen Young and Ella Brown, Village Cafe directors who have been a great help in making this happen, and smoothly.

Please see the FB page and watch Liz and Alfie's presentation.

Hymn Sing of the Lord's goodness

Offering & Prayer Of Dedication

Today we share in the matter
of giving and receiving.

Paul said, "I know what it is to have little and I know what it is to have plenty." Lord,
you know.

Today we thank you
by bringing our little
to represent our plenty, to share your bounty, to enable others' needs, to be satisfied.

Take these representations
of our love for you
and ease the burden of your people. In the name of Jesus,
we bring these prayers.
Amen.

Prayer over the Leaves

Gracious Creator, whose love knows no bounds, we lift our hearts to you. As the sunrise paints the sky, may your grace illuminate our paths. . May our prayers, whispering as in rustling leaves, be carried by the wind to your listening ear. Amen.

Prayers For Others And Ourselves

We come to you now in prayer,
seeking you with our whole heart, offering prayer for the welfare of the city where
we are sent,
where we find ourselves
this day of worship.

For those who consider this space to be home,
and those who feel
they are in a period of exile, we offer prayers
on behalf of the place where we are, for in its welfare,
we will find welfare.
When one is suffering,
the whole community is less than it could be.

We share in the distress
of those in our community
who do not have freedom of movement. And we pray for people on the move,
for people who hold hopes
of returning to a home
where their memories lie,
for keyholders who know someone else is occupying their treasured space. Make a home for the wanderer, we pray. Lord, broaden our understanding of home and help us be welcoming
as you are.

There are lonely in your world,
who might benefit from a word of cheer. A letter even, helping to communicate each

is remembered, important, valued. Place upon our hearts
individuals who would find joy
by our initiative and interaction.

We offer in prayer for solace
where in the community
there is tension between
keeping the purity of stories and people
and interweaving beautiful dimensions of diversity, sharing of traditions and learning
together.

As we form unions and team ministries, we pray for a balance in keeping tradition
and forming new rituals together.

May the community benefit
with these new interactions.

We pray for your church across the world as she interprets the Biblical stories
for people who may not
even know they are looking for you.

Help us to be truthful to your intent, and to allow space for your Spirit
in the hearing of your word.

We now come with prayers yet unspoken in the silence,
bringing our gratitude and our concerns...

Silence

Loving God,
we are so grateful
for the opportunity of prayer,
for corporate and individual expressions of relationship with you. We listen for your
Word this day.
Amen.

The Lord's 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

Hymn Great is thy faithfulness

Sending

Live in the presence of God, whatever your circumstance.

Trust in God's promises, however, you might be feeling.

Share the hope God gives to you,
no matter what is going on around you.

Speak the love of God
to offer encouragement to others.

Be a blessing and receive God's blessing,

So who to love God and serve the people

Serve God and love the people

And the blessing of God Almighty
Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon you and all whom

you love ...

and be with you always

Amen