

# **Welcome** to Penicuik: St Mungo's Parish Church online



**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**This act of worship has been prepared to allow us to spend some time with God, knowing that others are sharing in it.**

**We thank all the team involved in creating and distributing this service, and praise God for his unchanging character and unfailing love.**

**This order of service is for you to use as you are able: some of you may wish simply to read it, whether silently or aloud. Others may wish to listen, and even join in with the singing: just click on the links.**

**If you want to join in the whole service, click link <https://youtu.be/zp3T7NI6hDo> which you'll also find on our website: [www.stmungos.freeuk.com](http://www.stmungos.freeuk.com). And if you would like to listen to just the sermon and a prayer, dial **01968 700121**. There will be about 20 seconds' silence, after which the recording should start.**

**WELCOME** to St Mungo's. We're glad you can join us.

Today we are celebrating Holy Communion.

If you are joining us from home and would like to put aside some bread and wine (or something which would represent them), please retain them until the appropriate part of the service and consume them reverently and thankfully.

If you would rather not participate, you are equally welcome to listen and enjoy spiritual communion with Christ and 'feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving'.

## **HYMN: Hear the song of our lament**

Watch video <https://youtu.be/A-psE7q59ko>

Hear the song of our lament,  
we grieve a dry and broken land;  
hearts have turned from your intent  
and earth is ravaged by our hand.  
Oceans weep for beauty lost,  
and forests plead for your return,  
fields are drenched in tears and blood;  
all nature groans beneath sin's curse.

*Have mercy, have mercy,  
have mercy on us, Lord.  
Renew us, restore us,  
have mercy on us, Lord.*

Peoples rage and nations rise  
to war and waste for senseless gain,  
turning from creation's cries  
and trading glory in for shame.

*Have mercy...*

Lead us in your Eden call  
to live as those who bear your name;  
show us how to love your world  
until the day you come again.

*CCL# 7158764 © Keiko Ying / Resound Worship, Administered by Jubilate Hymns Ltd  
Recorded by Sara & Sam Hargreaves, Gemma & Timo Scharnowski <https://engageworship.org>*

### **CALL TO PRAYER** (*words from Psalm 33: 16-18*)

Kings aren't saved by the strength of their armies;  
warriors aren't rescued by how much power they have.

A warhorse is a bad bet for victory;  
it can't save despite its great strength.

But look here: the Lord's eyes watch all who honour him,  
all who wait for his faithful love.

### **PRAYER**

Heavenly Father,  
we thank you that your plan stands firm for ever;  
but sometimes we think we know better than you  
and imagine that by using ungodly, un-Christian ways,  
we can achieve your purpose,  
or even further our own plans instead of yours.

Help us to see that this is not honouring to you.

*Have mercy on us, Lord. Restore us, Lord.*

Open our eyes, our ears, our hearts and our minds  
to your good purpose in Jesus, so that by trusting him,  
we might live out his way and thrive in it.

Lead us, guide us in the good and the right way,  
in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

*Adapted from prayers by Our Daily Bread Ministries*

## THE STORY SO FAR

David has handed down rough justice to a resident alien, an Amalekite absorbed into Israel, who has attempted to deceive him about the Amalekite's role in the death of King Saul, to win favour with him. David and his men mourn Saul and Jonathan.

David seeks God's guidance, again by means of the High Priestly ephod, about whether he should go back to Judah. The sacred objects lead him to settle in Hebron and his band of followers go with him. There the people of Judah anoint him in a sign of acceptance of David as their king. It's of political significance, but it doesn't have the same *sacred* significance as Samuel's anointing David at the Lord's command.

David has been giving gifts to the towns of Judah, his own tribe. The gifts come from the spoil taken from their enemies and are meant to assure them of his goodwill toward them. Now, David reaches out to the people of Jabesh-Gilead, Saul's staunchest supporters, commending them for burying Saul with honour, and offering his political friendship. He mentions, by the by, that he has been anointed King of Judah. David is following a political course, applying gentle pressure, but other people would rather fight for political power in Israel, brother against brother.

At some point a kingmaker has appeared in the northern tribes of Israel. This is Abner, a cousin of Saul's and a powerful general in Saul's army. He makes a new king, Ishbosheth, one of Saul's remaining sons, but there is no doubt that Abner is the real power behind the throne. It's a slow business: it takes about five years before Abner and his puppet king gain control of the northern tribes.

Abner emerges from his powerbase beyond the River Jordan and confronts David's forces. These are led by David's nephew, Joab. Abner challenges Joab's men to a battle of champions. They pick twelve on each side: a resonant number, as it is the number of the tribes. The result is an absolute stalemate, with all the men stabbing each other: a symbolic picture of the futility of civil war. Fighting breaks out and, after a fierce battle, David's men defeat Abner's men, with a large number of Abner's people killed.

The storyteller highlights one incident in the battle because of its future significance. Abner is pursued by Asahel, Joab's brother. He warns him off and tells him to pick on someone else, saying that if he has to kill him, it will start a blood-feud with Joab, which he wants to avoid at all costs. Asahel refuses to turn back, so Abner suddenly stops short and raises his spear. Asahel runs full tilt into it and is impaled on the back end of the spear. (It's a mistake to think of this as being the blunt end: ancient warriors' spears could be sharp at both ends.)

Joab and his remaining brother pursue Abner and his troops, until the Abner's forces adopt a strong defensive position on a hilltop. Abner shouts out: 'Does the sword have to go on devouring forever? You must know it will turn bitter in the end. When are you going to order your troops to stop chasing their brothers?'

Joab agrees. It's getting dark and he can only win absolute victory at great cost to his side. However, he has not forgotten Asahel's death: Abner is now a marked man.

## BIBLE READINGS

### 2 Samuel 3:1, 6-39 (NLT)

Readers: Bill & Margaret Webster

**R1:** That was the beginning of a long war between those who were loyal to Saul and those loyal to David. As time passed David became stronger and stronger, while Saul's dynasty became weaker and weaker....

As the war between the house of Saul and the house of David went on, Abner became a powerful leader among those loyal to Saul. One day Ishbosheth, Saul's son, accused Abner of sleeping with one of his father's concubines, a woman named Rizpah, daughter of Aiah.

Abner was furious. "Am I some Judean dog to be kicked around like this?" he shouted. "After all I have done for your father, Saul, and his family and friends by not handing you over to David, is this my reward—that you find fault with me about this woman? May God strike me and even kill me if I don't do everything I can to help David get what the Lord has promised him! I'm going to take Saul's kingdom and give it to David. I will establish the throne of David over Israel as well as Judah, all the way from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south." Ishbosheth didn't dare say another word because he was afraid of what Abner might do.

**R2:** Then Abner sent messengers to David, saying, "Doesn't the entire land belong to you? Make a solemn pact with me, and I will help turn over all of Israel to you."

"All right," David replied, "but I will not negotiate with you unless you bring back my wife Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come."

David then sent this message to Ishbosheth, Saul's son: "Give me back my wife Michal, for I bought her with the lives of 100 Philistines."

So Ishbosheth took Michal away from her husband, Palti son of Laish. Palti followed along behind her as far as Bahurim, weeping as he went. Then Abner told him, "Go back home!" So Palti returned.

**R1:** Meanwhile, Abner had consulted with the elders of Israel. "For some time now," he told them, "you have wanted to make David your king. Now is the time! For the Lord has said, 'I have chosen David to save my people Israel from the hands of the Philistines and from all their other enemies.'" Abner also spoke with the men of Benjamin. Then he went to Hebron to tell David that all the people of Israel and Benjamin had agreed to support him.

When Abner and twenty of his men came to Hebron, David entertained them with a great feast. Then Abner said to David, "Let me go and call an assembly of all Israel to support my lord the king. They will make a covenant with you to make you their king, and you will rule over everything your heart desires." So David sent Abner safely on his way.

**R2:** But just after David had sent Abner away in safety, Joab and some of David's troops returned from a raid, bringing much plunder with them. When Joab arrived, he was told that Abner had just been there visiting the king and had been sent away in safety.

Joab rushed to the king and demanded, “What have you done? What do you mean by letting Abner get away? You know perfectly well that he came to spy on you and find out everything you’re doing!”

Joab then left David and sent messengers to catch up with Abner, asking him to return. They found him at the well of Sirah and brought him back, though David knew nothing about it. When Abner arrived back at Hebron, Joab took him aside at the gateway as if to speak with him privately. But then he stabbed Abner in the stomach and killed him in revenge for killing his brother Asahel.

**R1:** When David heard about it, he declared, “I vow by the Lord that I and my kingdom are forever innocent of this crime against Abner son of Ner. Joab and his family are the guilty ones. May the family of Joab be cursed in every generation with a man who has open sores or leprosy or who walks on crutches or dies by the sword or begs for food!” So Joab and his brother Abishai killed Abner because Abner had killed their brother Asahel at the battle of Gibeon.

Then David said to Joab and all those who were with him, “Tear your clothes and put on [sackcloth]. Mourn for Abner.” And King David himself walked behind the procession to the grave. They buried Abner in Hebron, and the king and all the people wept at his graveside. Then the king sang this funeral song for Abner:

“Should Abner have died as fools die?

Your hands were not bound;  
your feet were not chained.

No, you were murdered—  
the victim of a wicked plot.”

All the people wept again for Abner. David had refused to eat anything on the day of the funeral, and now everyone begged him to eat. But David had made a vow, saying, “May God strike me and even kill me if I eat anything before sundown.”

This pleased the people very much. In fact, everything the king did pleased them! So everyone in Judah and all Israel understood that David was not responsible for Abner’s murder.

**R2:** Then King David said to his officials, “Don’t you realize that a great commander has fallen today in Israel? And even though I am the anointed king, these two sons of Zeruiah—Joab and Abishai—are too strong for me to control. So may the Lord repay these evil men for their evil deeds.”

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**Matthew 13: 31-32 (NET)**

**Reader: Margaret Webster**

[Jesus] gave them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest garden plant and becomes a tree, so that the wild birds come and nest in its branches.”

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## SHORT ADDRESS

### HYMN: Who Is Like You?

Watch video <https://youtu.be/ywtFUo7ZJlc>

Son of Man and Son of God,  
perfect life and perfect love.

Jesus, Jesus.

The God of Life who takes on death,  
triumphs with a final breath.

Jesus, Jesus.

Who is like you? Who beside you  
gives their life to save the sinner?

Jesus.

Who can fathom love that ransoms?  
Pays the debt to give us freedom?

Jesus.

Reigning now and lifted high,  
seated at the father's side.

Jesus, Jesus.

One day coming back again,  
when your kingdom will not end.

Jesus, Jesus.

*[Bridge]*

You conquered the grave and you rescued us,  
the Son of God, you reign.

The victory of your eternal love:

the Son of Man, you save.

*Who Is Like You?* Emu Music, © 2019 Alanna Glover, Liv Chapman, CCLI Song No: 7153732

## HOLY COMMUNION: THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

### CONFESSION

God of our hidden depths,  
in honest regret, in humble trust,  
we confess our faults and recognise our frailty.

Show us that we are forgiven  
so that we may forgive.

Touch our wounds with your healing  
so that we may be people who heal.

Help us to be at peace with ourselves  
so that we may become makers of your peace for others,

through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world. **Amen.**

### **FOLLOWING JESUS' EXAMPLE AND COMMAND**

So now we do as Jesus did and commanded us to do.  
We take this bread and wine (the ordinary things of the world)  
which Christ, in his own way, will make special,  
and as he prayed before sharing, let us pray:

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Praise be to you, our Father, for your Son Jesus Christ.  
He walked with his disciples, taught them  
and shared meals with them.  
He lived and died for love of us,  
and, after rising from the dead,  
he wonderfully met with his disciples.  
He ascended into heaven  
and through the power of the Holy Spirit he is with us now.  
Therefore, we join the saints and angels,  
echoing your praise throughout the world and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

As we remember his death on the cross,  
his sacrifice made once for all to save us,  
we rejoice in his living presence.  
Send your Holy Spirit to us, that the bread that we break  
and the cup that we bless may be to us  
the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Unite us with him and with all God's people in heaven and on earth.

Let's join together in the family prayer of the Church:

**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, for ever. Amen.**

## THE SHARING

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

*(the bread is broken)*

We take this wine to share in the Blood of Christ.

*(the cup is raised)*

We believe that he who lived,  
died and rose again for us  
will meet us here.

Jesus said: 'This is my body. It's given for you.  
Do this to remember me.'

*(we eat the bread)*

Jesus said: 'This cup is the new relationship with God  
made possible because of my death.

Drink it, all of you, to remember me.'

*(we drink the cup)*

## THE PEACE *(using British Sign Language)*

The peace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.

## HYMN: Were I to cross from land to land

*(based on Psalm 139)*

Watch video <https://youtu.be/AW6AQe4KL3c>

Were I to cross from land to land  
and sail afar by sea,  
descend the depths or climb the heights,  
my Lord remains with me.

Before the blood ran in these veins,  
the days ordained for me  
were written in your book, O Lord,  
before I came to be.

I grieve to hear your enemies  
speak hatred, Lord, of you.

Long though they scheme with ill-intent,  
their days are numbered too.

How precious are your thoughts to me,  
how countless, Lord, they are:  
more than the shores have grains of sand,  
more than the skies have stars.

Come search and test this heart, O Lord;  
dispel each anxious thought  
and lead me onward evermore  
to tread the path I ought.



How blessed I am, so bound with love,  
surrounded, yet so free.  
In doubt or blessing, life or death,  
my Lord remains with me.

*New Scottish Hymns © 2008 Greg De Blieck CCLI – 6467780; Sung by Emily Smith  
Words & Music: Greg de Blieck; Accordion: Emily Smith; Upright Bass: James Lindsay*

## **THE BLESSING 7**

May the blessing of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you. **Amen.**

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**Next week:**

**KIP Service: Theme: Eating together  
(led by the Rev John Urquhart  
and a team of people  
from PNK, PSH and St Mungo's.)**