

Church Bulletin

We are a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland. We gather each Lord's Day to praise and worship the only true and living God.

Sunday 2nd January 2022



MINISTER'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

We come into the New Year with thankfulness and perhaps with a sense of the fear of the unknown. The year that has closed we leave behind with its pains and sorrows as well as with its blessings and joys. The Word of God reminds us that *"there is nothing new under the sun"* (Ecclesiastes 1:9) but in many ways 2021 has been a year of unprecedented challenges and difficulties. The COVID-19 pandemic has meant the loss of many lives, has affected the long-term health and wellbeing of friends and families across the country, and has left us with an ongoing economic crisis. This is on top of what we might describe as the regular challenges of our generation and times – political unrest and instability, the increasing absence of biblical morality, and the marginalisation of Christianity and the teaching of the Word of God.

Humanly speaking, we have so many reasons to be discouraged! But our encouragement comes from the Word of God and the example of the people of God in past generation. The Apostle Paul is our greatest human example of living in a world like ours and coping with the challenges confronting every generation. Remarkably, he was able to say that he was *"content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities"* (2 Corinthians 12:10); he was also able to say that his afflictions were *"light and momentary"* (2 Corinthians 4:17). He was able to say this only because he trusted in a *remarkable God*, who loved with a *remarkable love*, and who saves through a *remarkable Saviour*. His whole approach to life was forward-looking and heaven inspired as he *"looked at the things that are unseen... eternal"* (2 Corinthians 4:18).

We have an insight into how his mind and Christian faith worked in his letter to the Philippians – *"one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:13-14). In the past year, we have all had things that we would like to forget, but perhaps these very same things are *unforgettable*. Some are *unforgettable* because of the joy they brought to us; and some are *unforgettable* because of the pain and sorrow they brought to us. In the mystery that is God's providence, we believe that everything God gave us was to encourage us to look forward and upwards, follow in the footsteps of Paul, *"forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:13-14).

May this coming year be a year when we find grace, mercy and peace from God our Saviour; a year when our delight is in God. And as we go forward seeking to be pleasing to Him, we could do worse than adopt the following prayer of the Puritan Robert Hawkins (1753-1857), in the classic language of his day, and which he prayed to God as 'To the Gardener of my Soul':

'Oh, precious Jesus—may I be no longer unfruitful in your garden! Lord, do as you have said. Dig around me, and pour on me all the sweet influences of your Holy Spirit—which, like the rain, the sun, and the dew of heaven, may cause me to bring forth fruit to God.

And, Lord, if you will listen to an unworthy creature like me plead for others, let the coming year bring the same blessings to all your redeemed—even to my unawakened relatives, and to thousands who are still in darkness.

I pray that this may be to them the acceptable year of the Lord! Amen.

C. Macleod (Minister)

SUNDAY SERVICES

We gather for public worship this Lord's Day at 12.00noon and at 6.00pm. Both the services will be conducted in English and taken by the Minister. Our [Church Bulletin](#) is available under the News item on the Main Menu bar of our [Website](#).

New Year's Day Service

The New Year's Day Service will take place in the Church at 12.00noon on Saturday 1st January 2022. As we enter the New Year we will seek the encouragement of the Word of God from Psalm 91 and the subject of 'The Pledge of Divine Protection.'

Services this Sunday

Our services today arise out of reflection on our hopes and expectations as the people of God at the beginning of a New Year. At the 12.00noon service we will look at Revelation 21:1-4 and the subject of 'The Promise of a

Better Future. At the 6.00pm service we will look at Revelation 22:12-17 and the subject of 'The Prospect of Christ's Return.'

Psalm Singing

The praise will be led by our precentor and the Psalms for this Lord's Day are as follows:

	12.00 Noon Service		6.00pm Service	
1	Psalm 33:1-7	Psalter (245)	Psalm 42:1-5	Psalter (262)
2	Psalm 24:7-10	Psalter (230)	Psalm 130:1-8	Sing Psalms (173)
3	Psalm 107:27-31	Psalter (384)		

English Services

The English services in the Church at 12.00noon and 6.00pm will be live streamed and will be available on the Shawbost Free Church of Scotland **YouTube Channel** by clicking [here](#). An audio-only recording of the English services will be available on Sermon Audio at 2.00pm for the 12.00noon service and at 8.00pm for the 6.00pm service. The services can be accessed on the Shawbost Free Church **Sermon Audio Page** by clicking [here](#).

The **New Year's Day Service** will also be live streamed and will be available on our **YouTube Channel** and on our **Sermon Audio Page** as per the above arrangements.

Gaelic Service

A pre-recorded video service conducted in Gaelic from the same passage as the 12.00noon English service will be available on our YouTube Channel at 10.30am on Sunday. The audio-only recording of the Gaelic service will be available at 12.00noon on Sunday on the Shawbost Free Church Sermon Audio Page. The audio-only recording of the Gaelic Service will also be available on the Twilio service, accessed by dialling 0131 510 2471.

COVID RESTRICTIONS

The Scottish Government COVID-19 Restrictions Guidance for Places of Worship was updated on 9th December and 16th December with no substantial changes but with general advice for good practice. We continue to observe the one-metre physical distancing in our services in line with the advice from the Scottish Government and to help allay people's anxieties in public gatherings in the light of the ongoing presence of the COVID-19. We will also continue the practice of taking a register of all those attending our services. We must be vigilant in observing all the public health guidelines as our communities continue to suffer from COVID-19 and the current omicron variant.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There will be no Sunday School during the School Holidays. We thank children and parents for their support of the Sunday School during 2021 in what has been a challenging time. We trust and pray that God will bless our homes and families as we enter 2022 and learn about God's Word and salvation as we face the challenges that lie ahead in the new year.

PRAYER MEETING & BIBLE STUDY

The weekly Prayer and Bible Study meeting will take place in Church at 7.00pm this Wednesday, 5th January 2022. We will engage together in a time of prayer as we enter the New Year and seek to serve God faithfully. We will observe the same one-metre physical distancing and take a register of those attending the meeting in line with our practice for Sunday services.

FREE CHURCH YOUTH CAMPS 2022

The new Free Church Youth Camps' Coordinator, Mairi Beaton, is pleased to announce that registration for the Free Church Youth Camps 2022 is now OPEN. The programme offers eleven camps in four different locations across the country. The camps are a great opportunity to make new friends, take part in various activities, games and challenges, as well as learning more about the Bible and its relevance to our lives. The registration deadline is Monday 31st January 2022. More information on the FCYC Programme and how to register is available on the Free Church Youth Camps website [here](#).

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER - 2022

In the past, we have focussed on praying for congregations across the Church through the Praying For One Another (PFOA) information issued on a weekly basis. The arrangements for PFOA will change for 2022.

This year weekly emails will be issued every Monday giving one prayer point for each day of the week. This will include prayer points from local congregation and global mission partners. Paper copies of the prayer points will be available each month for those who prefer hard copies.

You can sign up for the PFOA weekly emails by clicking [here](#). Alternatively, you can use the QR code on the PFOA image below.



**PRAYING
FOR
ONE ANOTHER
2022**

Sign up here: 