



Life in Fullness – The Year of Africa and the Caribbean



SERVICE OF WORSHIP

LEADER

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Welcome to worship at

Announcements

On the 19th March 2013 a service was held in Westminster Abbey to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Dr David Livingstone, that great missionary explorer.

David Livingstone is one of Scotland's best known and best loved sons and in our service this morning we will explore something of his life, his achievement and his legacy.

So let us worship God as we sing to God's praise and glory the hymn - *God whose almighty Word. (CH4 no 112)*

God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight;
hear us, we humbly pray,
and, where the gospel-day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.



Saviour, who came to bring,
on your redeeming wing,
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
now to all humankind
let there be light.

Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy dove,
speed forth your flight;
move o'er the waters' face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.

Blessed and holy Three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might,
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the world far and wide
let there be light.

CALL TO PRAYER:

Praise the Lord O my soul and forget not all His benefits who forgives all Your sins.....and crowns You with love and compassion.

(Psalm 103: 2,3,6)

Let us pray

Powerful and holy
compassionate and forgiving
drawn by Your presence and promise
we worship and adore You

God of grace and love
we come to listen for Your Word
searching for a greater understanding
and a deeper truth



We come with all our hopes and dreams
our doubts and disappointments
seeking a fuller way of life
for ourselves and for all creation

We come to You
because in Jesus of Nazareth
You have come to us
living among us
sharing the joys and sorrows of human experience
and showing us what life at its best should be like

In humble reverence
we bow before You
and with the Psalmist
we praise Your holy name

But with the Psalmist we also recall
that if You were to treat us as our sins deserve
if You were to repay us according to our iniquities
we would be lost and without hope

With sorrow we confess
that the world You created to be good
is made sad by human violence and hatred
a world rich in resources
is one in which prosperity is enjoyed by some
and poverty endured by many

We also admit our own failures of love and friendship
the hurt we have caused
the disappointment we have created
the opportunities we have missed.

Trusting in Your goodness
and in the sacrifice once made for us at Calvary
we confess our sin
and seek the forgiveness that is Your gift.

May the God of love and mercy forgive you
and set you free from all your sin



Jesus said, Arise, go in peace, your faith has made you whole.

Risen Christ,
your wounds declare your love for the world
and the wonder of your risen life:
give us compassion and courage
to risk ourselves for those we serve,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen

SCRIPTURE (Acts 11: 1-10)

LEADER

In the first reading we hear about Peter being questioned by the other disciples. They are unhappy that Peter has spent time in the home of a Roman centurion called Cornelius and ask Peter to account for his actions.

As the story unfolds we learn of old boundaries being crossed and new horizons created as Peter is given a fresh insight into God's presence and purpose.

READER

Let us hear the Word of God

The reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 11 and reading from verse 1

The apostles and the believers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticised him and said, 'You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.'

Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story: 'I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was.

I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds.

Then I heard a voice telling me, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

'I replied, "Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth."



‘The voice spoke from heaven a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”

This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.

Amen

LEADER

The theme of fresh horizons continues as either a hymn or the choir sing an anthem by Maurice Bevan – ‘There’s a wideness in God’s mercy.’

HYMN OR ANTHEM

SCRIPTURE (John 13: 31-35)

LEADER

In the course of his ministry Jesus was sometimes accused of mixing and meeting and eating with the wrong sort of people. The gospel reading continues the theme of widening perspectives and fresh understanding as Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment to love one anotherand they will soon learn this love is to be without limit or restriction.

The second reading is from St John’s gospel, chapter 13, and beginning at verse 31.

READER

Jesus said, ‘Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him.

If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

‘My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and so I tell you now: where I am going, you cannot come.

‘A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.’

Amen



May God bless to us these readings from His Holy Word and to His name be all glory and praise.

LEADER

The Psalms are much loved by Scottish congregations and we are now going to sing one of our favourites: I to the hills will lift mine eyes.

(CH4 no 81)

I to the hills will lift mine eyes.
From whence doth come mine aid?
My safety cometh from the Lord,
who heaven and earth hath made.

Thy foot he'll not let slide, nor will
he slumber that thee keeps.
Behold, he that keeps Israel,
he slumbers not, nor sleeps.

The Lord thee keeps, the Lord thy shade
on thy right hand doth stay:
the moon by night thee shall not smite,
nor yet the sun by day.

The Lord shall keep thy soul; he shall
preserve thee from all ill.
Henceforth thy going out and in
God keep for ever will.

SERMON (to be delivered by Leader or other person)

Brought by faithful hands over land and sea, here rests David Livingstone, missionary, traveler, philanthropist.

For 30 years his life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelize native races, to explore the undiscovered secrets, to abolish the desolating slave trade of Central Africa.



These are some of the words inscribed on the stone which marks the final resting place of David Livingstone in Westminster Abbey.

There was a generation of Scottish children brought up on the stories of David Livingstone with Sunday school visits to the museum at his home town of Blantyre.

To many young minds Livingstone personified everything embraced in the word hero.

.....he came from a humble background.

..... he left school aged ten to work in the local mill.

.....through his own efforts he studied to better himself, became a doctor, and was sent to Africa as a missionary explorer.

.....he was the first European to come across the falls he named after Queen Victoria.

.....and of course there was the famous encounter with Henry Morton Stanley; Dr Livingstone I presume.

What courage, what faith, what excitement: David Livingstone, a hero.

Contemporary interpretations are much more critical of Livingstone's life and work including the terrible sacrifices borne by his wife and family.

They are also critical that many missionaries had little sympathy for indigenous forms of African culture, community and spirituality, and that they failed to recognize that Christianity can be traced in Africa to the 1st century AD.

Despite all these reservations, Livingstone remains an extraordinary and fascinating man, bold, driven, intelligent and persistent.

Whatever his failings, Livingstone's revulsion at the slave trade, a trade he famously described as *the open sore of Africa*, and the campaigning he did for its eradication is surely to his eternal credit.

And although throughout Africa, European names were replaced as countries gained independence from their colonial masters, the fact so many Scottish place names and references to Livingstone continue is also fitting testament to his legacy.



It is sometimes difficult to separate the man from the myth.

.....it is said that he died while kneeling at prayer

.....it is also said that although his heart was buried under a Mulva tree because it belonged to Africa.

Whatever the truth the timeline of his life is not in dispute

In 1840 a meeting with Robert Moffat of the London Missionary Society led the following year to the Society sending Livingstone to the edge of the Kalahari Desert.

So began what Livingstone believed to be his God-given mission to reach people on the African continent, a mission expressed in the three words carved onto the base of his statue at the Victoria Falls: Christianity, Commerce and Civilization.

If the gospel brought the good news of Christ and the promise of salvation, Livingstone believed the introduction of legitimate commerce would counter the evil of the slave trade and give people a decent way of earning a living.

Livingstone also hoped that as commerce flourished so hospitals and schools would be built, towns would be established, all the hallmarks of his western understanding of civilization, leading to the people of different tribes and regions living peaceably together.

Livingstone saw the beauty in Africa, a continent rich in its natural resources and wildlife.

He saw too the potential of her people.

Learning their languages he had an empathy with Africans and became their voice against three distinct groups; Boer settlers, the British Cape Government and Arab slavers.

It was a wonderful vision, a vision of life in all its fullness, a vision grounded in Livingstone's passionate belief that Christ died and rose again for all men and women and that everyone is equal in the eyes of God and should be treated accordingly.

Clearly not all Livingstone's dreams were realized.

Christianity has certainly flourished in Africa and it has found its own joyful African voice, heart and soul.



The slave trade was abolished but in many ways it has been replaced by the evils of the trade in the human trafficking of women and girls.

And while legitimate commerce has been established in some parts, and to the benefit of African people, even today the exploitation of Africa's resources continues.

At the 2013 meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland a major report from the World Mission Council outlined some of the opportunities and challenges facing Africa and its Christian churches.

The report is grounded in the experience of our partner churches and mission partners and explores these major issues; climate change, peace building and conflict.

What the report also does is to pay tribute to David Livingstone.

Paradoxically for someone sent as a missionary he made few converts but he inspired many other missionaries to follow.

Although he was honoured by the Royal Geographical Society for his mapping of the areas through which he travelled, in reality his expeditions didn't entirely achieve their intended goals.

And yet his reputation continues to be honoured such that the President of Malawi, Joyce Banda, felt it appropriate to attend the bi-centenary celebrations at Westminster Abbey.

Like Peter giving an account of why he spent time with the Gentile centurion Cornelius overcoming old racial boundaries and opening the faith of the early church to a broader understanding of God's nature and purpose, so David Livingstone opened up not just parts of Africa but also our Christian understanding of the length and breadth of God's concern.

And in more ways than I am sure he realized, he showed us what Jesus' new commandment looks like, the commandment to love one another without limit or restriction.

Extending our horizons.....coming to a deeper understanding of God's presence and promise.....learning how to love one another: look around our world today, look to the cities, towns and the communities where we live and work, and look within our church today, there is still much inspiration to be found in the life of Dr. David Livingstone, missionary, traveler and philanthropist.



And for those of us who aspire to follow in the ways of Christ, this entry in one of his journals captures it best;

I place no value on anything I have or may possess, except in relation to the kingdom of Christ.

If anything will advance the interests of his kingdom, it shall be given away or kept, only as by giving or keeping it I shall promote the glory of Him to whom I owe all my hopes in time and eternity.

Amen

LEADER

Our next hymn captures something of David Livingstone's passion for justice but also his profound conviction that God's love embraces all people irrespective of their colour or nationality. *For everyone born a place at the table.* (CH4 no 685)

For everyone born, a place at the table,
for everyone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for everyone born, a star overhead.

*And God will delight
when we are creators of justice and joy,
yes, God will delight
when we are creators of justice,
justice and joy!*

For woman and man, a place at the table,
revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power,
for woman and man, a system that's fair.

For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands kind and wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong.

For just and unjust a place at the table,
abuser, abused, with need to forgive,



in anger, in hurt, a mind-set of mercy,
for just and unjust, a new way to live.

For everyone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
for everyone born, the right to be free.

PRAYERS

LEADER

A B and C D will lead us in prayers for the world and its people concluding with the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to say

A B

God of all people and nations
as we celebrate the bi-centenary of the birth of David Livingstone,
we are glad to thank You for his vision of the gospel,
his commitment to the equality of all people and races before God,
his insistence on humanity's shared dignity in Jesus Christ

C D

We thank You for his thirst for learning,
his observation of the natural world,
his strength of character and spirit of adventure

A B

We pray for all who continue Livingstone's work today,
who explore the natural world,
who offer medical expertise and care wherever it is most needed
all whose work protects and upholds the dignity of human life.

C D

We pray for the Church of Scotland's mission partners in Africa today;
Rob and Rita Jones
David and Rebecca Morton
Helen Scott and Ruth Shakespeare
who serve in Malawi;

A B

Jenny Fetherstone
Ida and Keith Waddell
Glen and Wendy Lund



who serve in Zambia.

CD

We pray for our partner churches throughout the continent,
all who seek the harmony and mutual enrichment of different cultures,
who pursue justice and reconciliation through the world
creating bonds of peace and friendship.

AB

(include prayers appropriate to local circumstances)

CD

Inspire us by Livingstone's example and legacy
and in all the opportunities and challenges of our life
let us promote the glory of him to whom we owe
all our hopes in time and eternity
Jesus Christ our Lord in whose name we are glad to pray

(including whole congregation)

Our Father
which art in heaven
hallowed by 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

LEADER

We draw our morning service to a close with one final hymn, a hymn reminding all
God's people to honour and share the grace and love of God. 'Ye servants of God, your
Master proclaim'.



Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious, and rules over all.

God ruleth on high, almighty to save;
and still he is nigh, his presence we have;
the great congregation his triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation to Jesus our king.

'Salvation to God who sits on the throne!'
let all cry aloud, and honour the Son:
the praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore, and give him his right:
all glory and power, all wisdom and might,
all honour and blessing, with angels above,
and thanks never-ceasing, and infinite love.

BENEDICTION

LEADER

Go now in the love and peace of Christ our Lord
The blessing of God
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
rest and remain with all of us
this day and evermore.

Amen

ORGAN VOLUNTARY