



On the 2nd July 1620 the Kirk Session met for the first time in Longside and so began a 400 year journey for this congregation that has brought us to today. We read in the Prophet Isaiah chapter 28 verse 16, “this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation’”. The Apostle Paul draws on that same foundation imagery in 1 Corinthians 3 verse 11 where he says, “no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ”. The existence of our church these four hundred years later confirms that our ancestors did indeed built our church on the firm foundation that is Jesus Christ. God has been with his people here in this place down through the years and he continues with us on into the future.

We had many activities planned to help us celebrate such an important milestone culminating in a service of thanksgiving on the last Sunday of June at which the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, was due to give the address. But with the arrival in our country of the coronavirus, the cause of the dreadful Covid 19, all of that had to be cancelled and rightly so. Perhaps many of you have been struggling to see beyond our present restrictions never mind on into the future. And yet God is calling us to be faithful as our forebears were faithful. Many of the great hymns have words of encouragement for us. “Guide me, O thou great Jehovah pilgrim through this barren land” or “O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come”, many, many more are available for us to draw on. But I want to share words of a hymn written a little over ten years ago; it’s called “By faith” (MP1262) and it was written by Keith and Kristyn Getty with Stuart Townend. In the last verse we are told that “By faith this mountain shall be moved and the power of the gospel shall prevail, for we know in Christ all things are possible for those who call upon His name”. We can have confidence that by faith this coronavirus mountain that is before us can and will be moved. We will worship together once more and be ready to answer God’s call anew to “walk by faith and not by sight”.

Will you join me in prayer

Loving God, at this time of thanksgiving and celebration we praise you for who and what you are. We marvel at your great goodness, the love and care, mercy and forgiveness you have so faithfully shown to us; the strength, support, guidance and inspiration you have so freely given. Loving God, for all the ways you are with us, we praise you!

Gracious God, at this time of memories as we recall the past we praise you for all you have done for us – the lessons we have learned, the blessings we have received, the friends we have loved, the goals we have reached, the faith that has grown. Gracious God, for all the gifts you have showered upon us, we praise you!

Living God, at this time of looking forward and anticipating the future we praise you for everything you shall yet do among us – all that life continues to offer, all we have still to attempt and experience, all who in time will become part of our fellowship, all that will test and challenge us, and all which will bring us joy and fulfilment in the years ahead. Living God, for all you still hold in store, we praise you!

Almighty God, for all you are, all you have been, and all you shall be, we praise you in the name of Christ!

Amen.