

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of  
Saint David  
EASTER 5 May 14, 2017



*Come, people of God! Let us sing the praises of the One who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light! For once we were not a people at all, but now we are God's people! Let's worship God together.*

Hymn: You know that the Lord is gracious

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*Introduction to prayer: God who has called people to repentance, who has set the world on a course toward the coming kingdom, who has appointed his Son as Savior and King - you alone are worthy to raise the dead to life and*

*forgive sin and evil deeds. May we proclaim the good news of your sovereignty to the heavens, to the hills, the valleys, the plains, and to the depths of the sea.*

*Compassionate God, in the quietness now, we make our personal prayers to you: our confessions of wrongdoing, our needs for healing and our offloading of anything that troubles or burdens us. Through the silence Lord, hear our prayers. [silence] Lord hear our prayer. God whose Spirit interprets our deepest longings we praise you for Your never-ending and limitless love and mercy. Now we are ready to feast upon Your Word to us today. In Jesus' Name we pray.*

Hymn: We are God's people

(1-2)

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**1 Peter 2: 1-10** *Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation - if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

This epistle identifies its author as: 'From Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ.' And while modern Biblical Criticism has questioned whether the apostle Peter is its author, the traditional view is still accepted by many. Its contents show that it was written to encourage Christians, scattered across the Roman world, who were suffering severe persecution.

The striking imagery of the passage draws on the idea of a spiritual

Temple and speaks of Jesus Christ as the cornerstone and of Christians as the 'living stones' being built together into its structure. The physical Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70AD – in all likelihood around the time this letter was written, which makes the description of the spiritual Temple a very evocative one.

Quoting from Isaiah and the Psalms, the author makes the startling claim that it is the very stone that was rejected that has become the cornerstone of the spiritual Temple. This spiritual Temple is the spiritual home of a new chosen race, God's own people. A description no longer confined to ethnic Jews, but appropriate to all who have been 'called out of darkness into his own marvellous light'.

Hymn: We are God's people (3-4) **472**

### Focus Passage: 1 Peter 2: 2-10 Living stones

**Foundations** – the critical bit of any building is the bit you don't see. Without good foundations no building will last long. The cornerstone of an ancient building was the first masonry to be set in the foundations, and on it the whole of the building rested. If it was cracked or out of true, the building would crumble. Peter is using this image to illustrate the place of Jesus in the life of Christian believers. Anything not built on him will fall. The irony of the passage is that it is the very stone which was rejected that has turned out to be the critical cornerstone. *What things of Christ do we reject by our words and actions?*

**Walls** – while the foundations are critical, buildings also need walls. Without them the building is of limited use – especially in a Scottish climate! If Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, it is ordinary Christian believers that are the bricks used to make the walls. Unlike the inanimate bricks of a physical building, which can be cut and shaped as required, the 'living stones' of the 'spiritual temple' have minds of their own! There is a sense here that we need to allow ourselves to be shaped together for the walls to be built up. Co-operation with others is the very business of building Christian fellowships. *In what ways do we enhance or sabotage the co-operation required to build with 'living stones'?*

Hymn: I am the church **475**

### Invitation:

Jesus invites us to grow in faith and life by gathering together around table. *Here 'you may grow into salvation - if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.'* **O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

*The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us.*

*Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.*

*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.* (Continue in thanksgiving)

*O God, giver of all that is good,*

**Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. May we know you in the teaching, praying, breaking of bread and especially in the communion we share with one another. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other.**

Hymn: Christ is made the sure foundation (verses 1 -3) **482**

### Communion

#### Prayer after Holy Communion

*We have been fed at the banqueting table prepared for us in love and sacrifice.*

**Nourished, we go out into our daily lives to share the blessings of God.**

Hymn: Christ is made the sure foundation (verses 4-5) **482**

*Come to him, a living stone, rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*