The Power of the Word (Ordination & Induction Service)

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Date: 28 August 2021

Preacher: David Randall

[0:00] this afternoon to this service. It's a great pleasure on behalf of the Presbytery to welcome you here, although many of you are welcoming the Presbytery here, for which we thank you as well, and a great pleasure to share in what is a special and a big and an important day in the life of the congregation here. So we wish you well all together as we proceed on this occasion, which we do with the worship of God, as we turn to sing to the praise and glory of our God from Psalm 34, the verses are 1 to 9, at all times I will bless the Lord. Psalm 34, verses 1 to 9.

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[2:37] Psalm 34, verses 1 to 9.

Psalm 34, verses 1 to 9. Psalm 34, verses 1 to 9.
Please be seated. Please be seated. And now let us pray.
Our great and thank you to God as we rejoice in the Lord. A sometimes and thank you. We rejoice in you, O Lord, for you are worthy to be praised. We come, Lord, with thankful hearts, having come to this day today to acknowledge you as our God.
having come to this day for the beginning of something new and exciting, and to come to this day to mark the continuation of a ministry of the Word that has taken place here in this place for generations. We come before you, O God, to give thanks for that legacy of faith that is passed down from the patriarchs and on down through the generations of biblical history, and on down through subsequent history to even today. We thank you, Lord, for those who have proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ in this place, and rejoice, O Lord, that that Christ, that Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, today, and forever. We come, therefore, before you as our constant God who changes not. Much changes through the generations, O Lord, but you change not.
[5:20] Your compassions, they fail not, because you are the faithful God. And so, as we come before you on this afternoon, Lord, we seek your face. We bow before you in humble and reverent worship. We would be careful to give you your place in this gathering, O Lord, as we believe that you are here amongst us by your Holy Spirit. And ask, O Lord, that our focus is on your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that in all things, the living God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we'd be honored and exalted here today. So, draw near to us, we pray, O Lord, as we are met here in worship today. Draw near, bless this gathering with your presence, we pray, and may all that is said and done and accomplished here today be in accordance with your will and for your glory, O Lord. Forgive us our many sins which we confess before you, and grant that we might focus ourselves wholeheartedly and earnestly on you. All this that we ask is through Christ our Lord and in His name. Amen. Now, I would invite you, if you have a Bible there, to turn in the New Testament to the second letter of Paul to Timothy. We are going to read there in chapter 4, verses 1 to 8. 2 Timothy chapter 4, verses 1 to 8.

So, 2 Timothy 4, we read from verse 1. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge. Preach the word. Be prepared in season and out of season. Correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away

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from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship. Do the work of an evangelist. Discharge all the duties of your ministry. For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day. And not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing. Amen. And we thank God for His word to us today.

Now we were, my family and I had a holiday in Royal Deeside not so long ago. We live in Falkirk, and we were in Deeside on holiday. One of the things that we did while we were there was we went to Drum Castle and paid a visit and really enjoyed that. And one of the stories that we heard from the guide was about the parish minister there out at Drum. One exhibit on display in the castle was the minister's hourglass. And I don't know if you've seen one of these before. The minister used to have an hourglass. It would sit in his pulpit. And the idea was that he would turn over the hourglass, and he turned it over. I want you to note this point. He turned it over not at the beginning of the service, but at the beginning of the sermon, okay, for the hour. And then the idea was that he had to be finished by the time the sand ran through in an hour's time. What do you think?

Good idea? Well, this minister at Drum turns out to have been a crafty kind of a minister because the guide told us that when the hourglass came into the possession of the National Trust for Scotland, they ran the sand through it and discovered that it actually took an hour 40 minutes for the sand to run through. So what do you think about that? That was quite a crafty minister. I suppose in his day, the average person did not have a wristwatch to be able to check and were just apparently taking his word for it. Well, but on the occasion that we are in today on this ordination and induction, I can think of no better, more profitable, and more God-honoring thing for us to do than to refresh and renew our commitment to the Word of God and to the preaching of the Word of God. We should be in no doubt that we are living in days when there is a diminishing confidence in and commitment to the Word of God. And I'm afraid that's true not just out there in our increasingly secular society, where it's hardly surprising that people have no time for the Word of God. And I'm afraid it's not just in liberal churches either. One hears of churches with a more evangelical heritage and tradition, where the preaching of the Word of God is being reduced and replaced in perhaps more subtle ways, but undermined all the less. And it is always timely to refocus our hearts and our minds on the

Word of God and the centrality in the church of the preaching of that Word, especially because this ought to be our heartbeat in church and ought to be our desire and our hunger as we come before God.

[11:24] So to take us into our subject, let me share with you another story from the history of the church, a story from the 18th century of a certain Scottish minister who recalled an English merchant who had been traveling in Scotland in the course of his work and had spent three weeks in Scotland, during which time he spent three weekends in Scotland. And he described his experiences on these weekends when he had been in church on the Sundays. He said at St. Andrews, he had listened to Robert Blair, minister of St. Andrews. And that man, he said, showed me the majesty of God. And then afterwards, the next weekend, he said he heard, quotes, a little fair man preach. And that was Samuel Rutherford. And that man, he said, showed me the loveliness of Christ. And then he had another week, and then the weekend came, and he found himself in Irvine by the next weekend. And he heard a discourse there by a well-favored, proper old man, as he described him. They describe people well in these times, didn't they? This guy was called David Dixon. And he said, and that man showed me all my own heart. And I thought, that English merchant really did get something worthwhile there over these three weekends, didn't he? He showed him a vision of the majesty of God, a glimpse of the loveliness of Christ, and a real showing of the reality of his own heart. And I'll tell you what, if a congregation gets that from a preacher, then they really have something to be thankful to God for, as they sit under the ministry of that word. So I thought that these three observations from that merchant, we stand as in good stead this afternoon to think about these themes. 2 Timothy 4, verse 2, Paul instructs Timothy, preach the word in season and out of season, correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction. So the call is clear enough. And such a ministry as is faithful to that, the instruction to preach the word, the occasion, well, all the time, in season and out of season. The detail, well, it includes correcting, rebuking, and encouraging, and the skills, great patience, and careful instruction. Such a ministry as that will surely be blessed by God the Holy Spirit as it is undertaken.

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So I want to, pursuing this, to think a little bit about what it means, as that English merchant found, to be shown the majesty of God.

To be shown the majesty of God. You know what? There's an awful lot of the time is spent today thinking about the situation of man. Maybe many sermons start thinking about the situation of man. I think we'd do better to think about starting with the majesty of God most of the time. All of the time, in fact. It was Robert Blair of St. Andrews who had showed this man the majesty of God. He was a 17th century covenanter and minister. He had a bit of a tumultuous ministerial career. In fact, he was ordained in Bangor in Ireland in 1623. He was deposed in 1631. Despite having a fruitful ministry, he was sent to Ayr. And then he found his way to St. Andrews in 1639, moderator of the General Assembly 1646. And he was a Westminster divine. So he had quite an impressive ministerial career.

But actually, it's a lot better to be known for showing people the majesty of God than all the rest of that other stuff when it comes down to it. We don't know exactly what that man Blair preached on as he impressed upon this traveling merchant the majesty of God. But if you think for a moment of Psalm 93 and the portrayal of God that we find there in that psalm, then you see something of his majesty. The Lord reigns. He is robed in majesty. The Lord is robed in majesty and is armed with strength.

And that's a picture of our God. That's a picture of our God we do well to reckon with and to enter into. Not just a God who is here to serve us, but the God of all glory, the God enthroned in highest heaven. The God before whom all men must give account. The God to whom is rightly due all praise and worship and adoration and thanksgiving. This is God. And it is so important for believers to be shown the majesty of God. I would suggest to you, if you have come to church some Sunday, down, struggling, facing adversity, then you will be far better served by a preacher who focuses your mind on the majesty of God than one who begins where you may be feeling. Because that is always the need for us to behold something of the majesty of God and understand God and life and the universe and everything in light of what we see there in the almighty. Why is it so important? Well, it's important because we need to believe in the God who actually is. God, as he has revealed himself. I think it was

[16:52] Voltaire who quipped that God made man in his own image and ever since man has been seeking to return the compliment. And there's a lot of that goes on. You know, people who say, well, the God I believe in is dot, dot, dot. Well, frankly, I don't care about the God you believe in, but I'm interested in God as he reveals himself, the God who is the living, eternal God. And it is, well, God's name tells us that God, God is who God is, and God reveals himself as he wants to be revealed. His name is, I am who I am. It never is, I am who you might conceive me as being. It is, I am who I am. It is absolute.

And so, we need to behold God in his majesty. It's also important for true worship to behold the majesty of God. To see God in his majesty is precisely what inspires within us the appropriate humility and reverence and thanksgiving and praise in our hearts before him. A vision of God's majesty is also important for perseverance and encouragement in the Christian life. As I was saying already, in times of trial, it will be this vision of the majesty of God that will give you something, that will shoot some spiritual adrenaline into your soul to keep you trotting on through the tough stuff. And that vision of God's majesty is also important for authentic evangelism, presenting a real picture of the holy God and of the sinner before him and of the sinner's need of the grace of the gospel.

Because anything less than that is not authentic evangelism and is underselling the gospel and is misrepresenting God. But no, the preacher who, not just in his preaching, but in his public prayer, in the way that he reads the scripture, and in his general demeanor as he goes about his duties, the preacher who shows his listeners the majesty of God will certainly do them a great service.

Well, then that Englishman next was shown the loveliness of Christ. And you remember that that was from Samuel Rutherford. Now, Samuel Rutherford is a hugely influential and significant figure, not just from Scottish church history, but from all of Scottish history. He bridges the gap, really, between the era of the Reformation and that of the Covenanters, most strongly associated with Anwath in southwest Scotland, where he ministered from 1627 till 1636, whereupon he was booted out for being too Calvinistic, and he was punished. Do you know what his punishment was? [19:46] I wonder if you do. He was sent to Aberdeen. That was his punishment. What do you think about that, Joe? He was sent to Aberdeen. Now, listen, as a person who lived for, I think, 14

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years in Aberdeen, who arrived in Aberdeen as a boy of 18 and left as a man with a wife and two children. I feel your sense of outrage about all of this and how her... But that's a true story. He was sent to Aberdeen as his punishment. He was involved in the signing of the National Covenant in Greyfriars Kirkyard in 1638. He would become Professor of Divinity in St. Andrews. He was a Westminster divine. His book, Lex Rex, wasn't too popular with the king either, you may have read. And Rutherford was said to have shown this merchant the loveliness of Christ. I'll tell you what, it wouldn't only be that merchant that was shown the loveliness of Christ by Rutherford, because Rutherford loved to proclaim Christ, loved to exalt Christ. In fact, it was a fellow minister said of him, many times, I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of

Jesus Christ. He was never in his right element, but when he was commending him. He would have fallen asleep in bed, speaking of Christ. That's a great testimony, isn't it? And again, we don't know the text that Rutherford had preached on that occasion, but in pursuing the theme, my mind was taken to Philippians 2, where we find that passage from the Apostle Paul that details both the condescension and the exaltation of our Lord and Savior. And that's the thing, isn't it? That the loveliness of Christ is seen most in his saving work. The Bible says it wasn't so much that he had a natural beauty to attract us to him or any of that kind of stuff. No, the loveliness that was and is in his character is found and seen in his saving work. And it's certainly seen to the fool in the gospel that he is at the center of. He was in very nature God, but did not consider equality with God something to be grasped. He made himself nothing, took the nature of a servant made in human likeness, down, down, down, to be found in appearance as a man, a striking condescension, and then all the way to humble himself and become obedient to death, even death on a cross, the Apostle says. Even death on a cross.

It is surely a mark of the loveliness of Christ that he was willing to come and to so identify with us. He had no sins to die for. It was our sins that he humbled himself to death for. How shall we ever adequately describe or do justice to the loveliness of Christ in all that he has done for the people that God has given him? But there he is on the cross, becomes the sin bearer. There he is, bears sin's penalty. There he is, suffering God's necessary wrath against sin. There he is, breaking the chains of sin and death and hell. We can certainly say this, the death that he suffered was the ugliest moment of history, but the victory that he won is the loveliest. Isn't that right?

He is the sinner's hope. He is the sinner's confidence. He is our hope altogether. But of course, he went down, he went down, he went down, and death could not hold him. And God exalts him, exalts him not just up a bit, but up to the highest place. That section, Philippians 2, is kind of V-shaped, isn't it? It goes down and down and down, and it bottoms out, and then it comes back up again to find the very highest place. They're given the name above every name, the victory that is affirmed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ there. The loveliness that was seen in his gracious condescension and self-sacrifice is now seen in the supreme elevation of Christ to the place of all glory and power and authority. And here is the great consequential reality, that in the end of the day, as a result of all of this, at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he, Jesus Christ, is Lord to the glory of God the Father. That is the ultimate reality. In the end, everybody is going to come and is going to make that confession. Some, alas, who were not prepared to be confronted with that in the end, and who will make that confession with, maybe with regret, maybe with fear, but certainly not with a willing, eager faith in Christ, but believers. Believers to make that confession with great joy. The one whose loveliness we beheld in life, we rejoice to meet.

And then the loveliness of Christ will be the theme of endless praise in the heavenly realm. Isn't that right? And the way, of course, if there's any uncertainty concerning all of that about the way in which you will make that confession in the end, then the way to be sure is to settle it right now. Because wise people, discerning people, spiritual people, do not decide to wait until the last day and think about it then. No, we can make our preparations now. We can ensure that we are ready to face our judge and our savior in the end by making that confession now. Jesus Christ is Lord, confessing it with our mouths, believing in our hearts, and the assurance of the Bible is that in so doing, we will be saved.

[26:13] This is the message that we have concerning Jesus Christ and the loveliness of Christ. He is the passion of every preacher. Jesse Ryle wrote this, Christ, in one word, is the grand touchstone of the minister of religion. The man who makes much of Christ is a pastor after God's own heart, whom God delights to honor. The minister who makes little of Christ is one whom God

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regards as an imposter, as one who has climbed up to his holy office, not by the door, but by some other way. But blessed will be the congregation who are shown, who are shown, and who apprehend, and who meditate upon, and who live in light of the loveliness, the sheer, unadulterated, brilliant loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so then finally, this afternoon, that merchant was shown the condition of his own heart. Just picking up on what we've just been saying a little bit, but Irvin in Ayrshire, the Reverend David Dixon, who was most strongly associated with Irvin, in fact, he was ordained in 1618. He opposed episcopacy and so therefore was deposed and punished.
Do you know what his punishment was? He was sent to Tarif. Anybody from Tarif, I wonder, imagine, what a punishment being sent to Tarif. You can take that with me later if you want to. But circumstances changed again. He came back into favor. He became professor of divinity in Glasgow. He was also a moderator of the General Assembly twice. He's a significant figure in the Steuarton revival in 1625. And that merchant said that that preacher showed him all his own heart. He showed him all his own heart. This is really where the rubber hits the road, isn't it? Because you can be shown the majesty of God and you can be shown the loveliness of Christ, but until it comes to the point of penetrating into the depths of your own heart, then you're still facing that question on that last day about Jesus Christ being Lord. So this really is where the rubber hits the road. In the end, it comes down to how it is between he and thee, between the Lord God Almighty and you in your own heart. This man was shown his own heart. The condition of our heart is more important than any other condition that we have in our life. Isn't that right? Psalm 51, David cries to God, create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. And that ought to be the heart cry of every one of us, every believer in the Lord Jesus, that beginning in our hearts and in fact going all through us, there would be this increasing purity and steadfastness. David had a friend. His name was Nathan. He was a prophet. And that friend showed him all his own heart at one important juncture of his life. You remember that David recognized when he spoke and wounded him deeply, he recognized the reality of what Proverbs tells us about wounds from a friend can be trusted. And David duly repented, but it was through being shown the state of his own heart that he came back into his fellowship with God. So the heart is alienated from God by sin, the natural human heart. That is the condition that we are in. This is what Nathan did for David. He showed him the need to bring his heart back to God. This is what all preachers legitimately do. They show something to their listeners of the condition of their own heart. Now, the preacher can't see into your own heart. So we trust the Holy Spirit to do that part of the work. And we put the message out there. And that's for the Holy Spirit to provide the conviction. And the preacher is seeking through all of that to impress upon his listener the need for a heart response to the Lord our God. The heart needs to be made right with God, therefore, through Christ, only in Christ. He only is the Savior. He only, the one who has died on the cross for our sins. He only who humbled himself so profoundly so that we may be made right with God. The heart needs to be made right with God. [30:53] Jeremiah says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. But by the grace of God, it may nevertheless be made right with God through Christ. And then having been made right with God, we find that the heart needs to be strengthened by God. Because becoming a Christian is not a one-moment thing. It is all of life. It is from that moment onwards and forwards.

The life of discipleship is tough. You know that. You've been living it yourself. Jesus defines it as self-denial and cross-carrying. But we're not left on our own to make the best we can of it, are we? We are assured of all of the power and all of the strength that we need. So, our hearts are in need of continual renewal from and in God. And for this, he sends us his Holy Spirit, without whom we could not continue for a moment in the Christian life, but with whom we have the guidance and the discernment and the enabling and the power and the understanding that we need as the Spirit sanctifies us.
The question, of course, for us is always, are we walking in step with the Spirit of God? Are we cooperating with the Spirit's sanctifying of our lives? Are we accepting the Spirit's promptings about what we ought to do and the Spirit's promptings about what we ought to desist from doing? Our hearts need to be strengthened in God. And then we see that our hearts also need to become passionate for God. Isn't that right? I hope that is true of you. I hope there is passion in your life. If there's not, well, high time there was.
And the Holy Spirit gives us passion in our lives in serving God. We shouldn't be dispassionate. We shouldn't be morose. We shouldn't be miserable in our service of God. If we are, then we're

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certainly not beholding the loveliness of Christ, are we? But all of this ought to charge us up and energize us as we become passionate for God and worship and in witness, as we seek God's glory in all things. I wonder, is that your heartbeat today as you've come here? It's the beginning of a new era, I suppose you could say. And it would be great if that new era was marked by a people who were passionate about God and His Word and His church and His people and His kingdom and His glory and His name. That is, a minister's not going to be able to do that all by himself. I'm sure he's going to try and not try to do it by himself, but he's going to do it along with you. And so to support him in that will be a great support and a great act as you seek to be passionate about God and about Christ and about the gospel, to be shown the state of your own heart. There is no more important thing to be shown, really, than that. And we do well to thank God for those who first showed us the state of our own heart and then to seek to be open to the continuing searchlight of the Holy Spirit within us. 2 Timothy 4, where we began today, in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge,

[34:34] Paul says. Preach the Word, be prepared in season and out of season, correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and with careful instruction. That is the calling that has fallen upon men and every generation since Paul wrote these words. And we see that that English merchant on his travels was blessed by the faithful ministry of these preachers of Scottish church history. May it be that this church will be blessed by the faithful preaching of the Word of God. May God empower His servant to preach it with courage, with clarity, and with conviction. And may He instill in you, His people, a deep hunger and love and appreciation for that Word and its being preached. And in this way, pastor and people will be united wonderfully together in the gospel to seek the blessing of the church, the growth of the kingdom, and the honor of the name of our great God. Amen.

Let us then respond to the word that we've shared there with some verses from Psalm 19. In Psalm 19, the second part of it that appreciates the Word of God, as we've been doing this afternoon, verses 7 to 14, the perfect law of God revives the soul of man. Psalm 19, 7 to 14.

The perfect law of God revives the soul of man. His statutes which are surely wise, the simple law, the precepts of the Lord our right, and fill the heart with great delight. God's radiant commands, shed light on what we see. The fear of God is pure and lasts eternally. The standards of the Lord express

His perfect truth and righteousness. His perfect truth and righteousness. Oh, for all worth and gold, and how pure gold they are, than how pure gold they are, than how pure gold they are, than how pure gold they are, than how pure gold they are.

They warn the servants of the Lord, in keeping them His great reward.

[38:16] The Lord's name of the Lord, who can discern His cause, forgive my hidden sin, keep me from willful deeds, may they not prove with me, and will first of all transgressions shame. Lord, let the world's eyes speak, be pleasing in your sight, and may my impulse thoughts be in your touch and cry. O Lord, you are a rock to me, you have redeemed and set me free.

Please be seated. Please be seated. Now the Presbyter of Clark is going to come and bring us up to where we are with proceedings at this point.

I have the following narrative for Reverend Joe Hall. Now the Reverend David McPherson having resigned due to him taking up work in Peru, the Bon Accord Free Church was preached vacant on the 2nd of February 2020.

On the 3rd of May 2021, the Vacancy Committee of Bon Accord met to discuss the filling of the vacancy. They reported that their focus was on a final year student, Mr Joe Hall.

On the 24th of May 2021, the Vacancy Committee then met with the Kirk session of Bon Accord Free Church to arrange an open call meeting. On the 25th of May 2021, the Presbyter of Edinburgh, Perth met and agreed to meet with the Bon Accord Free Church at Oordhenium in Hunk de Vecter on the 4th of July 2021 to seek with an open call to the Church to seek with an open call to that congregation and to make all necessary arrangements thereafter for Reverend Jeremy Ross to preach and preside.

[41:03] Then on the 13th of June 2021, the Kirk session then met with the congregation and the nameless Mr Joe Hall was duly elected. And on the 29th of June 2021, Mr Joe Hall was duly licensed at Edinburgh and Perth Presbytery to preach the Gospel.

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Also, the decision to have an Inquip de Vecter on the 4th of July 2021 to proceed with an open call was again noted. On the 4th of July 2021, the Presbyter of Edinburgh and Perth met with the Bon Accord congregation to proceed with an open call and to make all the necessary arrangements thereafter.
The nameless Reverend Joe Hall was inserted into the call document and the Presbytery duly sustained the call and Mr Joe Hall, being in the building, accepted the call.
At this meeting was agreed that the Presbyter of Edinburgh and Perth meet in the Hunk de Vecter in Bon Accord Free Church for the induction of Mr Hall today. That's Saturday 28th of August 2021 at 1.45 and then with the congregation at 2pm.
The moderator, David Randall, to preach and preside with Reverend Ivor Martin to address the congregation and Mr Hall. Thank you, Charlie. Thank you very much.
[42:33] In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, who being ascended on high, has given gifts for the edifying of the body of Christ.

We are met as a Presbytery to ordain Joe Hall to the office of the ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands by Presbyters to whom it belongs, and to induct him to the charge of Aberdeen Bon Accord.
The Lord Jesus Christ has given some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
As Joe has sensed this call of God upon his life to be a pastor and teacher, that call, having been recognized and sustained by the church, has led us to this point today, as we just heard from the clerk, and so we proceed with this ordination and induction.
Joe, could I ask, would you please come forward now? Now, would you please answer the prescribed question that I now put to you?
[43:56] Do you believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God and the only rule of faith and manners? I do. Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the confession of faith, the proven by former general assemblies of this church to be founded upon the word of God?

And do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith, and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power, assert, maintain, and defend the same and the purity of worship as presently practiced in this church?
I do. Do you disown all Popish, Aryan, Sassanian, Arminian, Erastian, and other doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever, contrary to and inconsistent with the foresaid confession of faith?
I do. Are you persuaded that the Presbyterian government and discipline of this church are founded upon the word of God and agreeable thereto, and do you promise to submit to the said government and discipline, and to concur with the same, and not to endeavour directly or indirectly the prejudice or subversion thereof, but to the utmost of your power in your station, to maintain, support, and defend the said discipline and Presbyterian government by Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, and General Assemblies?
I am and I do. Good. I am and I do. Good. Good. Good. Good. Good. Good. Good. Number five, do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ as King and Head of the Church has therein appointed a government in the hands of church officers distinct from and not subordinate in its own province to civil government, and that the civil magistrate does not possess jurisdiction or authoritative control over the regulations of the affairs of Christ's Church, and do you approve of the general principles embodied in the claim, declaration, and protest adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1842, and in the protest of ministers and elders, commissioners from presbyteries to the General Assembly, read in the presence of the Royal Commissioner on 18th May 1843, as declaring the views which are sanctioned by the Word of God and the standards of this church with respect to the spirituality and freedom of the Church of Christ, and her subjection to him as her only head and to his word as her only standard. I do. Do you promise to submit yourself willingly and humbly in the spirit of meekness unto the admonitions of the brethren of this presbytery, and to be subject to them and all other presbyteries and superior adjudicatories of this church, where God in his providence shall cast your lot, and that according to your power you shall maintain the unity and peace of this church against error and schism, notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble or persecution may arise, and that you shall follow no divisive courses from the doctrine, worship,

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discipline, and government of this church? I do.
[47:07] Are not zeal for the honour of God, love to Jesus Christ, and desire of saving souls, your great motives and chief inducements to enter into the function of the holy ministry, and not worldly designs and interests? They are.

Have you used any undue methods, either by yourself or others, in procuring this call? I have not. Penultimately now, do you engage in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, to rule well your own family, and to live a holy and circumspect life, and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge all the parts of the ministerial work to the edification of the body of Christ? By God's grace I do. And finally, do you accept of and close with the call to be pastor of this congregation, and promise, through grace, to perform all the duties of a faithful minister of the gospel among his people?
I do. Well done. Thank you. God bless you. And you are required now to sign the formula, which is here. The clerk will guide you just where to sign.
Amen. We'll give you a moment to do that. Now, Joe, if you would just take a step back there, just to the top of the steps, please, and turn back and face this way, I think. And if you would kneel, please, as we come to the ordination, and I would invite the members of presbytery and those who have associated with our presbytery already to stand and just come forward just around our brother here. [49:06] And I don't know if we're supposed to do this, but I think it would be good if the congregation were to stand and in that way be a part of this and show your participation in what we're doing in this way. So, given that Joe has satisfactorily answered these questions, put to him, and has duly signed the formula, let us now pray.

Eternal God, you who have established your church in this world with the promise that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, and who have blessed and guided her through all generations, hear us today as we give thanks for our brother Joe. We give thanks, Lord, for your hand upon him in his life thus far, for your grace that has drawn him to you, for your salvation that has redeemed him, your power that has sustained him, and, Lord, for your call that has led him to this moment. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon this, your servant, whom we now, in your name and in obedience to your will, by the laying on of hands, ordained to the office of the Holy Ministry within the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, committing to him authority to minister your word and sacraments, and to share in the government of your church. As we end up to the church of Aberdeen Bonacourt, keep your servant in the strength of your spirit, and enable him to minister faithfully in your word and sacraments, and to share in the government of your church. Bless him with your holy spirit. Deepen his faith. Enable him to set a worthy example of life and witness. Give deep conviction concerning your word and real clarity in preaching. Grant love in the service of your people. Instill great zeal and passion in the work of your kingdom. Make him faithful until his life's end. And to you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.
Thank you, brothers. And, Joe, if you would stand at this point, if you would return to your seats. And the congregation may be seated. Yes, please do.
Joe, I pray that out of God's glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your heart through faith. Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, and be thankful to God. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, brother, and whatever you do, whether in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Hate what is evil, cling to what is good, never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, be patient in affliction, be faithful in prayer.
[52:14] Joe, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth, I now declare you to be ordained to the office of the ministry, and inducted to the charge of Bonacard, and granted a seat in the presbytery, in token of which I and your brothers from presbytery now give to you the right hand of fellowship. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

God bless my Lord. Thank you, brother. Okay. Okay. Now it's my pleasure at this point in proceedings to hand over to Ivor Martin.
And Ivor is a person, I think, who probably needs no introduction in these parts. He is going to come now and give an address to Joe and to the congregation. Ivor.
Where do I stand? It doesn't matter. Joe, let me begin by saying how thrilled I am at this moment, not because I want to get rid of being the intra-moderator of Bonacard. Certainly not. But I just, with everyone else, I just can't help feeling a sense of joy at this moment, seeing you being installed and

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inducted, ordained into ministry and into this congregation. And I'm sure that I speak on behalf of everyone in the congregation when I say to you and Susie, welcome. And it's great to be here. It's great to be part of this event. It's traditional, a time like this, for an address to be given to the minister and the congregation. And I am very conscious of the time that is short. But just let me, if you really want to become a good free church minister, you have to develop the art of the three-point sermon.
[54:35] I have four. I don't know whether that makes me an old free church minister. Well, I am anyway. But I just want to say four things, Joe, very, very briefly. You and I have had many conversations about various things, not least of which was what we're doing today. And I hope these conversations will continue. I think Presbytery is all about helping one another and supporting one another.

The great thing about Presbyterianism is that we act as brethren and we ought never to feel that sense of isolation from one another in ministry. Because sometimes we can do that. Sometimes things get on top of us. And it's really important, I think, to be able to share these prayerfully with others. But just let me say four things. The success of your ministry, Joe, depends on four things. First of all, it depends on your piety. And I don't mean that your aloofness. I don't mean that in any derogatory sense. I mean that you need to stay close to the Lord. Your first responsibility is to yourself and to make sure that you stay close to Jesus. And of course, that involves a life of prayer. And I think as ministers, we have to confess that we have not engaged in that life as we should have. And yet, the ministry is full of new beginnings. And this is one of them. Let me encourage you, Joe, to make sure that your life is rooted in prayer and that prayer, your times with the Lord are the most precious times that you have. But it also involves your obedience to him as well in your own personal life. And you're putting into practice what you know and what you teach others. You need to lead by example as we all need to do. So your piety, Joe, is absolutely paramount. What is it that Robert Money McChain once said? My people's greatest need is my personal holiness. And he was absolutely right. Second thing, your ministry depends on your priorities. And by that, I mean the distribution of your time, your use of time. And I don't know how difficult it was in the old days where a fascinating look at Scottish church history. I know that you're very interested in that, Joe.
And we had a fascinating reminder today about that. I don't know what it was like in those days, but I know what it's like trying to keep yourself focused in today's world where there are a million distractions. And I don't mean the kind of distractions that we all know are harmful and that will lead us into sin. I mean, even the ordinary, the harmless websites and information sites and all kinds of different options that there are in today's world that will very easily mean you coming to the end of the day and you don't know what you've done. In fact, you've done nothing because you've been so distracted. It is such a danger in the life of the ministry. And I'm sure that you're going to be disciplined in your use of time. And that means, of course, not going to the other extreme either and not having time for your wife and your family. The use of time is absolutely paramount.
[58:14] And I know that I've made mistakes in this looking back over the past many years in ministry. And I guess an address like this is to try to encourage you not to make the same mistakes.

And then thirdly, that your ministry will depend on your preaching. Well, that's self-evident. Your preaching is what you do. That's what you've been called to do. And that is the pulpit here. Whether you choose to preach from there or whether you choose to preach from here, that's up to you. But you know what I mean. You're preaching. And I know that you're only at the very beginning. You have the tremendous benefit of youth and enthusiasm. I'm so jealous of somebody at the other end of the age spectrum. I remember standing exactly where you stood there and answering the same questions.
And that's solemnity. And the same excitement in beginning a new ministry. But I also remember the times when I blew it in the pulpit. And when I wasn't as prepared as I could have been.
And I can only look back at this congregation. They are very gracious. And they've certainly in my time, they've put up with a lot of poorly presented and poorly prepared preaching. But I know that you will. That doesn't stop us from putting every effort into our preaching. Now, I'm going to have a bit of a rant. It's going to take one minute, but it's not aimed at you. It's aimed at your cohort. Okay. And I do this anyway because this is my job. So you'll probably not be surprised. But let me say this.

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[59:56] There is a school of thought amongst younger preachers that says this. Preaching is simply explaining the Bible and let the Holy Spirit do the rest. I completely disagree. Preaching is far more than explaining the Bible. Explanation, of course, is part of it. We have to get the context. We have to have the preparation and so on and so forth. But preaching is far more than just explaining the Bible.

It is, as we've heard today, nobody expects you to fly out of the pulpit. But if we cannot be passionate, and we did hear this today, if we cannot be passionate about how Jesus came into the world, his death on the cross, his resurrection, then really, I don't know what we're doing.
And if we cannot be personal as well, we need to be personal with our people. As you get to know the people here, you will get to know their difficulties. You'll get to know them on a personal level. And you'll be able to, your preaching will be more informed then. And you'll be able to look them more in the eye and not simply lecture. I'm not suggesting that's what you do at the moment. But preaching is not lecturing. Preaching is personal. It's passionate. It's engaging with people. And I really do think that it's something that we want to develop as preachers. And I'm sure that you will.
Lastly, the success of your ministry, Joe, depends on your people skills, because church is all about people. And once again, as you get to know the people, you'll get to know them on a personal level. You'll get to know the older people, the young people, the children, the teenagers, the students, the married couples, the singles. And you'll get to share with them their lives. And they need someone who they can talk to in confidence and who will pray with them and who will take a genuine and prayerful interest in their lives. Somebody said to me the other day, I like Joe because he speaks to you. And I love that. I love that just that simple description of you. And it is so vital in the ministry to maintain that genuine interest in people that will stand or sit and just talk to them and listen to them, your people skills. So four points, Joe. And I'll just leave you with these.
[62:41] Your piety, your priorities, your preaching, and your people skills. May the Lord increase and develop these gifts, all the qualities that you need. You have them.

And may he give them to you in greater measure. Now the congregation, I have to address the congregation. I had the great pleasure and privilege of ministering to this congregation for six years. And we just love this congregation. You are a really privileged guy. But congregation, you heard enough of me last Sunday night. I think I shared with you a lot of what I felt needed to be said about preparing for a new ministry. Can I just say two more things in closing? First of all, Joe is a young man. And we need to be aware of that. Paul says to Timothy, let no one despise your youth. What that means from another angle is please don't despise Joe's youth. Don't look down on him because he is a young man. There's a certain kind of arrogance in people that says, oh, I'm 60 years old. What does he know? Well, hold on a minute. Just get to know him. And he's wiser than you think. And what he'll, or rather, he's wiser than, he's wiser than you might imagine.
I'm in such trouble now. I know. But it's true, isn't it? There's a certain kind of arrogance when you get to a certain age and that thinks, well, what do young people know? Well, remember Paul's words to Timothy, let no one despise your youth. Timothy was raised up for his day. This man is being raised up for ministry in Bon Accord. And God has a purpose for him. So accept him as your minister.
And accept him in love and respect him as your minister because he brings to you the word of God.
Let me just end with one more thing. Something I know about Joe is that Joe is keen academically.
[64:55] And I want to encourage you to develop his academic skills, to get him to develop his academic skills. I think this is true for every minister. I think there's a certain type of thinking in congregations as well. Say, well, he's been to ETS. What more does he need? Can I stop you there and say, he is just at the beginning. This is lifelong learning. And you, I think as a congregation, you need to encourage him to expand his horizons and to develop his gifts and his knowledge and his learning. And that way, when he gets into the pulpit, he will preach using that expanded knowledge and with that expanded experience. And he will bring to you the benefit of lifelong learning.

So this is a great occasion, Joe. I pray the Lord's blessing on you and Susie as you begin your time here and as you minister to this congregation. May he be your guide and your Lord and your light as you make your way from day to day.
Thank you, I will. Now, one of the most important people in these things is undoubtedly the Presbyterian Clark.
And I think he's got one more thing to say. Although he looks like this is a surprise to him. Do you?
Well, I was not surprised. I thought you covered it well in yourself.

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It was just to officially announce that we have added Joe Hall's name to the Royal Presbytery, which, in fact, the first meeting you can attend this Tuesday at seven o'clock.
[66:57] Absolutely fantastic. It's just a Zoom. Okay, it's just a Zoom. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Charlie, for what you've done to keep us on the right track. So we're going to bring the service to a close and then there will be more going on just after that. But for now, let us turn to the Psalter again and we're going to sing from that wonderful Psalm 103 verses 1 to 5.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is. Verses 1 to 5 of Psalm 103. For the rise, O bless God the Lord and all that in me is.
He stand, O bless God the Lord and all that in me is. He stand, O bless God the Lord and all that in me is. He stand, O bless God the Lord and all that in me is. To magnify and bless.
He's ten. Then there's no soul, my soul, the Lord, my God and all that in me is. O be, of all his gracious benefits, he hath bestowed on thee.
O thine iniquity to God, most gracious before him.
[68:37] Who thy diseases fall and pain, shall heal and be released.

Who doth lead in thy life back up, to death may shall go down.
Who thee with loving thy best self and tender mercies crown.
Who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy love.
So that he must be deep as it renew in thy youth.
[69:46] Amen. And so may grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with each one of us this day and always. Amen.

Would you please be seated? Well, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, on behalf of the congregation, let me extend a very, very warm welcome to everyone.
Not only those of you who regularly worship here, but those who have come to join us for this important event. I see a lot of well-known faces from other parts of the country.
The country, it's really good to see you. And I hope that you're able to join with us later for the tea afterwards. There are notices at various places giving details as to how to get there.
Please, if you don't know how to get to the King's Community Church, then please look at these notices and they should give you that information.
[71:01] Now, I am under strict orders that this has to be finished by 3.30, which means that those of you who are going to be speaking need to keep it short, I'm afraid, because we're trying to keep to time.

The first person I'm going to ask to speak is the session clerk, who is Mike Bowman, and he is going to officially welcome Joe on behalf of the congregation.
Mike, please. Mike Bowman, COVID safety rules.
For those in the building, keep your face masks on throughout the service. Maintain social distancing, 2 metres, 1 metres and reducing. No, I haven't picked up the wrong notes.
You're okay. Over the past year and a half, this has been the mantra. Because we have, as it were, been under the law.
[72:12] The law of COVID, that is. But today we are entering a period of grace. And taking the French word pronounced grass, I would say, grass a toile to Joe, but also say, grass a Dieu.

Thanks be to God. First of all, grass a toile. Meaning, thanks to you. Thanks to you, Joe, for accepting the congregation's invitation to become our pastor. An invitation that is like no other.
Not like a wedding invitation, for example, which is signed by the one person and sent to the many. Well, that's debatable over the last period of time. But this invitation that was sent to you was signed by the many and issued to the one.
To you as an individual and to you as a family, to the one family. An invitation encompassing Susie, the child yet unborn.
And if I were to stretch the blue book well beyond its remit, to Dudley the dog. But also, grass a Joe.
[73:22] Thanks be to God that he has brought pastor and congregation together. Preparing the congregation to send the call and your hearts to receive it.

Leading to this, this happy arrangement which we have today. Which brings me to two further French words, if you'll bear with me. The first one is bon, meaning good, meaning happy, meaning right.
And the second French word is that for settlement or agreement. Which of course is accord. So we have bon accord. Now, in our way we pronounce it in these parts, bon accord.

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So we can say that we have a bon accord in bon accord. A happy settlement here in bon accord. So it's not just a happy settlement for this congregation.
But it's a happy settlement for the whole of Aberdeen. But instead of putting out the bunting tape all across the city. In celebration of this event.
[74:22] We've gone one step further. And our sponsors have helped in this in this regard. And we've put out notices declaring this happy settlement.

So Aberdeen welcomes you with this reminder everywhere in Aberdeen. Bon Accord Street, Bon Accord Square, Bon Accord Shopping Centre, Bon Accord Bath and Bon Accord Glass. So whilst on this linguistic theme.
And coming to Aberdeen you will find many different languages. As you enter this international community called Aberdeen. And perhaps the international community that we have here in Bon Accord.
But that is, I'm afraid to say that there is one tongue. That will perhaps require an interpreter. Where Google Translate dare not go.
Or indeed shies away from. I'm referring to the Doric. With a man being close to a school. Don't panic if you hear that it is overrun with loons and quines.
[75:27] For these are not extraterrestrials or some other such thing. Even if to an older generation they might sometimes appear to be. So some in Aberdeen may speak in a strange tongue requiring an interpreter.

Finally, words are important. And none more so than the Word of God. In which you have been trained. And are able to expound in a much clearer near BBC English.
For all to understand. You may not always understand the locals. But with your clear exposition and delivery. They will thankfully understand you.
So as words are important. So also our actions. For it is said that they can speak sometimes louder than words. So with this act of giving.
I would like you to accept this gift from the congregation. As a token of our welcome. Our love. And of our support. For the days and times ahead.
[76:28] Thank you. I should say that Joe will get an opportunity of speaking in a few moments time. But first of all, if I could ask Anne McDonald. Where is she? Oh, yes, she's there.

Ann is going to formally welcome. I should say that Joe will get an opportunity of speaking in a few moments time. But first of all, if I could ask Anne MacDonald, where is she?
Oh, yes, she's there. Anne is going to formally welcome Susie. Either one, I don't...
Come round. Well, I get the privilege and the pleasure to officially welcome you, Susie, to Bon Accord on behalf of the congregation.
We are so delighted that you answered the call to come here so willingly and enthusiastically. You're clearly a very gifted and capable person, and we're really excited to get to know you better and to see how God is going to use your gifts here at Bon Accord.
[77:37] We're also very excited about getting to meet your little one whenever he or she makes their arrival. And I remember when Rob and I first came to Bon Accord about 12 years ago, roughly this time of year, I was in a similar position to you.

I was pregnant expecting Hannah. And I can remember how daunting it is to come to a new city and a new church. It's really exciting, but it is daunting. And I can assure you that the church family here at Bon Accord were wonderful.
They just loved us so well, welcomed us, looked after us through that very amazing but crazy, wonderful, challenging, life-changing time.
And that same church family is now your church family, and we're here for you too. So whether that's prayerfully or practically or just a listening ear when you need it, we're here.
So all that to say is you're so, so welcome here, Susie, and we're so thankful for you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
[78:48] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. And now, it is my great pleasure to officially hand this congregation over to their new minister. And I would ask you to once again please put your hands together to welcome the Reverend Joe Holley.

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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Well, thank you all very much and thanks to Ivar for his kindness in handing over.
Thank you, Mike, for the French lesson. French lesson. That was wonderful. And no, this is not the 10 o'clock news. This is just a short, a brief, a very brief word of thanks to you all for receiving us so warmly and so generously with so much love. And thank you for our wonderful gifts, which is just so, yeah, means so much to us on so many levels. But really, this day in itself is a gift from God to Susie and I. And from our first visit to Bon Accord last year, we went home saying that if we got to choose where we would end up, it would be there. That's where we would go. And of course, the time since then that's been recounted so ably by Charlie only seems clear and obvious when you look back at it.
[80:30] But the Lord, of course, knew that he was bringing us to this point. And as we've seen that unfolded in stages, it has become clearer to Susie and I that this is where he would have us. We have grown in excitement and in thankfulness to him for making this call so clear.

The warmth that exists in this church family and the love for God and for one another and the love and the friendship that we've experienced ourselves is just incredible. It's overwhelming.
And so I'd like to say that we are so blessed and thankful to be joining you today as a minister and a member. Our own families have come here today to join with us from the sunny south, from London and from Devon. And they are delighted for us, of course, only slightly disappointed that we're moving even further north away from them. But I hope today leaves you, our families, convinced that this is not a prison sentence. There are very many worse reasons to move further away and that to be part of this church family is a very good reason indeed.
I also want to thank just now all of you, and particularly the Housing Committee, for pouring in so much time and effort to prepare for us such a wonderful place to live. You've given us the keys to an amazing home for our family for the years to come. And it's a home that we hope will be full of the life of this church, both in the good times and in the difficult times, full of brotherly love, full of friendship, full of meals together, opportunities to serve one another as the Lord has served us. Cece and I can't wait to get to know you all better.
And as Micah said, that will take some time. But we are just so thrilled and delighted to have the opportunity to spend that time with you over the coming weeks and months and God-willing years, building friendships and growing closer to you all in God's grace.
[82:38] Lastly, before I invite Angus Mekiva to come and speak to Ivor on behalf of the congregation, I want to take a moment to thank Ivor personally. You know, I would have thought that three years at ETS would have been enough for Principal Martin never to want anything to do with me again.

We have enjoyed some conversations and edifying chats and playful banter over the years. And as we all now know, Ivor can give as good as he gets. But far from washing his hands of me, Ivor has embraced me as a brother and co-worker in ministry. And over the last five months, Ivor, you've been a constant source of support and guidance and encouragement to me.
Between running a seminary and leading this church, he's found time to reach out time and time again. And above all, getting me even more excited about coming here to begin ministry in a church that is so close to his own heart. Today, I received the baton, as it were, from Ivor's hand. But the student has not become the teacher. Instead, the teacher has become a friend. I am very, very grateful to you, Ivor, and to God. So on that note, let me invite Angus to come and speak to Ivor on behalf of the congregation.
Thank you.
Okay, that seems to work. Thank you, Joe, for handing over. Ivor, I know I speak on behalf of the whole congregation.
[84:28] When I say that we extend our heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to you for all that you've done, fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of Interim Moderator during this vacancy.

The congregation has greatly benefited from your diligence, patience, wisdom, direction, and encouragement during the vacancy. We are blessed by your ministry of God's Word on many occasions.
And by the minister that you arranged to come and preach in Bon Accord during this period of time. We're very grateful to those that came and preached in the congregation.

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It was a vacancy of many firsts and many challenges. We recall that the first vacancy committee meeting was held with a couple of remote participants.
And yet we had to negotiate the challenges of COVID restrictions and how and when we could open the church, how we could continue operating as a congregation throughout this period of time.
[85:45] And in each situation, Ivor, your love for the people of Bon Accord and your deep commitment to serving the congregation as Interim Moderator was evident.

Thank you for serving Bon Accord as effectively and lovingly as our Interim Moderator. Thanks also to Mary and the congregation at Est Valley for their sacrifice in allowing you to visit us on many occasions.
This card and gift is a small token of our deep appreciation we have for you. And thanks for how you serve the congregation. And our prayer, Ivor, is that we would learn to be imitators of you as you have sought to imitate the Lord in your commitment and diligence to serving the Lord in each task that we are able to fulfill.
And that in your ministry, you will be blessed in the same way that we have known blessing from your service. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. I was really moved by that.
[87:07] Thank you, Angus. I couldn't help thinking, and I know that this is even probably more moving, but I couldn't help thinking that the one and only funeral I conducted during the vacancy was Angus' dad, Kenneth McKeever, who was so well respected in the congregation over many, many years.

And he's such a loss to the congregation. And, yeah, it was, we cannot, and on an occasion like this, you can't help but thinking back into the past, especially the older you get, into the people who are now gone, who are now in glory, and who have supported this congregation and given of their gifts and their wisdom and who are such an example to us when we were young, which we're not anymore.
But can I just thank one or two people? I would thank Mike Bowman for just always being there at the end of a phone and for his diligence, just his, just reliability and his diligence.
Can I thank the vacancy committee for being so united from day one? There wasn't a crossword anywhere. It was just wonderful. It was difficult.
Of course, it was difficult for everybody in COVID. COVID hasn't been a nightmare for all of us, but the vacancy committee and the elders have been just great to work with.
[88:28] They are really, really good guys to work with. And I know that Joe looks forward very much to. Can I just mention one person, though? And I know he's not going to like me for this, but when COVID struck, I had absolutely no idea what to do.

I'd never preached to a phone before. It was always in a pool pool because I'm old school. And so when COVID struck, I had absolutely no idea what to do.
And Ian Bowman was on the phone right away and he says, OK, this is what we're going to do. He introduced me to OBS software.
I had absolutely no idea what I was doing. He talked me through it. And not only that, every single Sunday he was there. And it could not have happened without him and his team.
And so I just, I know I could hear your sense of appreciation. Now, I better stop because he's going to fall out with me if I don't. Thank you so much, Angus.
[89:38] Thank you for making this such a pleasant experience to everyone. Thank you. Well, I now have the pleasure of introducing and asking Alex MacDonald to come and share some words of encouragement.

We hear from three men to encourage us, to finish us this afternoon. Alex MacDonald, David McPherson, your old minister with a pre-recorded message, and Gerry Middleton from Gilcompton Church.
And I'll just ask the guys to follow on one from another for the sake of time. But just invite Alex now to come and speak to us. Thanks very much, Joe.
It's great to see you here, and we wish you all the very best in the ministry here. It's rather intimidating to come as a young minister to a large congregation, city-centred congregation like this. I came here in the glory days of the city. The oil boom was right in the middle of it, and the Dons had just won the European Cup, Winner's Cup. The city was going mad.

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[91:04] And I just hope that Bonacord didn't expect miracles from me when I arrived. Now, of course, we're facing different days. Both city and football club face much more uncertain times.

But the same God is able to bless your ministry as he blessed mine and those who came before me and after me. Did I mention intimidating? When we left the congregation here to go down to Edinburgh, to Bucklew, the congregation, the ladies of the congregation, very kindly presented us with a tapestry illustrating all sorts of aspects of our family life and ministry here.
But there was one bit in it that was very amusing. There was a picture of the Kirk session, and underneath was a quote from a Bob Dylan song, trouble, trouble, trouble, nothing but trouble.
Well, that was not strictly true, of course. But then, as I suppose now, there were strong characters in the Kirk session, and there were always strong characters in congregations, and we need to work along with people and get on with them.
And I'm sure you're going to do that as well. I'm not going to repeat the things that I've said already that I was going to say about preaching, the passion of preaching and the compassion in preaching and so on.
[92:22] That's been very well dealt with already. But you never know who's going to be in your congregation. That's a congregation like this city center. And the call is to preach Christ.

There may be people who are lost, who are struggling, who are in all kinds of difficulties, but Christ is the answer to everyone. I would also say a word to the congregation as well.
You've called Joe here to be your minister, and one thing that is required of you is loyalty and faithfulness to continue to support him and to pray for him and to work with him for the furtherance of the gospel here, and I'm sure you know that.
Well, in conclusion, my time here in Bon Accord was under God, I believe, a special time in spite of all my shortcomings and maybe the shortcomings of us all, but God blessed it in a very special way. And I look back on my 10 years here with great fondness. And there were great ministries before that, Douglas McMillan, Hector Cameron, and then after Ivor Martin, David McPherson.
[93:29] And you might feel sometimes a little bit intimidated with all that heritage that's gone before. But remember what the Apostle Paul said, you know, when people were bringing up various other apostles.

He said, by the grace of God, I am what I am. And God has given you gifts that he hasn't given to anyone else, and I'm sure he will bless you in the work here.
It's my prayer that you and the congregation here will know even greater blessing than any that has gone before and that the best is yet to come. Thank you. Good afternoon, folks.
Can I begin by thanking you for the invitation to participate in the ordination and induction of Joe? It's a joy and a privilege.
We would have loved to be there, but 10 days of quarantine in a hotel in Dice and little change out of £3,000 was just a bit much.
[94:39] So thank you for that, Nicola. We spent, as a family, 11 very happy years in Aberdeen and Bon Accord, and that was largely due to the love and kindness of so many in the congregation.

The Lord has called you, Joe and Susie, to a very special congregation of God's people. I guess I need to share at least one anecdote.
I remember when I first arrived at Bon Accord back in 2008, I was introduced at a congregational meeting by one of the senior elders as the boy David.
Now, I was already in my 40s, so I have no idea what that means to you, Joe. It's perhaps not my place as the former minister to give you advice, but we'd encourage you, Joe, to do two things. This is not an exhaustive list. The two things I would encourage you to do are to listen and to enjoy. First of all, listen. Listen to the Lord.
[95:42] We all know we should do that, but please spend time listening to him as he speaks to you in and through his word. As preachers, we have the privilege of spending hours studying God's word, and as you do, listen and hear God's voice.

But listen also to the Lord's people. Listen to your elders and deacons. Listen to the folks in the congregation, young and old, from near and far. And also listen to the city and its silent and perhaps unconscious pleading for the grace of God that we are called to share.
And one more. Listen to your wife. Now, you know this already, but I have it on good authority that Susie is well worth listening to.

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But also enjoy. Enjoy Aberdeen. Enjoy the city. Enjoy cults. Enjoy the neighbourhood where you will live. Enjoy Quarry Road. Enjoy the manse. Enjoy Bon Accord and the rich diversity of people that make up the congregation.
Enjoy serving God's people and sharing the good news concerning Jesus to all who will listen. And be assured that from across the world, in darkest Peru, we will be praying for darkest Aberdeen, and especially for you and Susie and the congregation.
[97:11] And nothing will give us greater delight than to hear news of the congregation growing in every way. And one vital thing. As you know, Joe, we are still members of Bon Accord.

And we look forward to a pastoral visit at your earliest convenience. I'm very sure the deacon's support will be more than happy to cover the modest travelling expenses.
And I do bring Susie along as well. Well, that's all I have to say this afternoon. Bye, folks. And do enjoy the tea and buns.
Every blessing. Good to see the guy again. I confess, Joe, that my sole knowledge of Bon Accord before I came to Aberdeen six years ago was derived from the Guinness Book of Records, where Bon Accord were on the wrong end of the largest score in a first-class football match when they lost 36-0 to Arbroath in the Scottish Cup.
That was back in 1885. Since then, I've discovered very rapidly that Bon Accord is something entirely different. The warmth of the folk, your predecessor, he played a very significant part at the outset of my time here in Aberdeen as he shared on the transitional leadership team in a very significant time for us as a fellowship.
[98:39] We were hugely grateful to him and to the congregation for the sacrifice that was made in giving him to us in that manner. And then it was our very real pleasure to have had the congregation joining with us on a Sunday evening regularly during the period of the renovation of the buildings here.

It was an absolute joy for us to be enlarged in that manner by the good folk here. And they are just lovely, lovely folk. And the psalmist's words, how good and pleasant it is when God's people dwell together in unity, was illustrated at that time in a very lovely way indeed.
And it's really that as I welcome you on behalf of the wider number of churches. There are many, many different fellowships and many, many different pastors and leaders throughout the city who love the Lord Jesus Christ, who are rooted in the scriptures, who seek to honor him and live by the power of the Spirit of God.
In their name, we're glad to welcome you. And do so against the backdrop of that psalm, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity.
For there, God bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. And it is our prayer, it is our prayer as a fellowship. We've certainly been praying at Gilcombe Center over many, many months for the congregation here, for yourselves, the two of you, and you to be enlarged family over the course of these coming days.
[100:10] It is our prayer that your coming here will indeed be one further step towards that bestowal by God of that blessing, even life in its fullness forevermore.

We're glad to welcome you. And before I get the evil eye, I will leave it at that. God bless you, both of you. Well, thank you so much, brothers, Alex and Jerry and David from afar from encouraging and helping us just as we close together now.
That brings us to the end of our time here at the church. Let me say just a massive and very warm thank you for being here this afternoon. I know you have busy and full lives, but it's just such a wonderful joy and celebration to be together for this occasion.
Thank you to those who have traveled from across Scotland and indeed the UK to be here as well. Just your presence means so much to us. And thank you for those who have organized.
For Ivor, to Charlie for David, and there's probably many, many people involved here I don't know of. But I thank you so much for that.
[101:26] Let me close, and let's close together in prayer. God, our Father, our hearts are full of thanks to you today for all that you have done for us, and for the wonderful blessing that you have poured out upon us, of which Jerry has just spoken, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank you for unity in him, that by your Holy Spirit you have united us to him through faith, and that therefore you have united us together as brothers and sisters in him.

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Father, we thank you for this church family at Bon Accord. And we commit ourselves to you, knowing that apart from you, we can do nothing.
Father, we thank you for what has taken place here today. And we pray that you would indeed bless it, not only to us today, this afternoon, but tomorrow, and in the weeks and months and years to come, that we together would look back on this day with even greater thanks, having seen what you have done as a result of it.
So we thank you for your grace now and pray your blessing as we go. Keep us safe as we travel, for we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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