

23rd March 2020

Holiness

**“Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
gold of obedience and incense of lowliness
bring, and adore him; the Lord is his name.”**

John Samuel Bewley Monsell, based on Psalm 96:8

I once took Communion to an elderly, housebound couple, George and Ellen, who weren't able to come to worship. So, the Church came to them, through good pastoral care and, now, Home Communion. As I prepared the Sacrament, I realised I'd forgotten the bread. "You don't have a piece of bread I could use, Ellen?" I asked. "Och, minister," she replied, "Geordie an' me had the last o' it fur toast wi' oor breakfast. But, ah think there's a hauf-slice left on the drainin' board by the sink. Awa' ye go, Geordie, an' fetch yon auld toast fur the minister's Communion."

And that's the way it was – the Eucharist with left-over toast! But I have seldom felt such an overwhelming atmosphere of holiness than I did with George and Ellen that day. God had filled their home with wonder and mystery, and a deep awareness of His presence.

Yesterday morning my wife and I sat on our sofa at 11 o'clock and listened to our minister share a worship Podcast with us. With Robin Allison's comforting voice, a time of prayer, the sharing of scripture and a brief reflection for the 4th Sunday of Lent, God was wonderfully present. Our painting of Iona Abbey became our stained-glass window; our olivewood *Pieta* took on a new significance. Our front room, where we were bound together in worship with our church friends and countless others, had become a place of holiness, because God was there.

A prayer for today

Ever-present God, thank you for not being confined to our churches, or being defined by our understanding. When we bow down before you, wherever we are, surround us always with the beauty of your holiness. Amen

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