



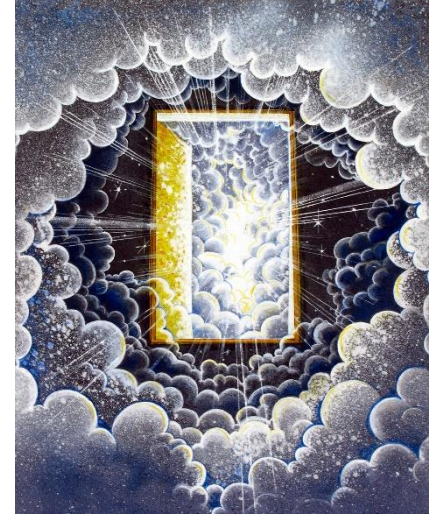
ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH

WEDNESDAY WORDS

NOVEMBER 20TH 2024

BASED ON REVELATION 4:1-11

Prayer: Dearest Creator God, what a world You have created! There is beauty and splendor in each direction I direct my eyes, up, down, left, right, and straight ahead. It's because You have enabled me to see the eternal connected to heaven and earth that I am able to marvel in its entire mystery. Lord, I pray for understanding in the revealed word today and have the capacity to apply it my everyday living. There is a message of hope in the words today may I be moved by it to humble my heart and open my mind, so the spoken words flow freely through me always as my faith is strengthened day by day, so I'm transformed to be less like me, to be more like Jesus.



Prayer point of thanks and praise:

- Thanks for: Committed leaders who care about people and those who dedicate themselves to serving the public, the organization they serve, so that justice is not only seen, but served.
- Thanks for Church leadership who continue to have open hearts and minds as they make difficult decisions about the future of Your church, at Assembly, SYNOD, Presbytery, and Congregational levels.
- Praise for the World Council of Churches as they continue to work in difficult spaces in a traumatized world.
- Praise for the many willing helping hands at the local level.

Prayer points of confession

- Not taking Your Word seriously, rearranging the Word to say what I want it say.
- Ignoring some and praising others
- In only pleasing myself; an occasional lack self-awareness
- Not caring to witness to others of the greatness and the mystery of the Created earth.

Words of Grace

In the wisdom of God, the world didn't know God through wisdom; for God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than mortal strength. Our Lord's words of grace to us is: 'Your sins are forgiven.' Thank you, God, amen.

Revelation 4:1-11

4 After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” **2** At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! **3** And the one seated there looks like jasper (clear like crystal) and carnelian (blood red), and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. **4** Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. **5** Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; **6** and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: **7** the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. **8** And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,

“Holy, holy, holy,

the Lord God the Almighty,

who was and is and is to come.”

9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God,

to receive glory and honor and power,

for you created all things,

and by your will they existed and were created.”

REFLECTION

I just can't imagine how John may have felt when accepted the invitation and take that leap of faith and stepped through the door. What an extraordinary vision of the divine order of the universe he was presented with.

From the moment John steps through the door opened to him in heaven, he is ushered into an entirely different realm, distinct from our earthly experience. This right of passage

signifies access to a deeper understanding of God's immense reality, characterised by His sovereignty and holiness.

As John enters this celestial space, he is met with the amazing sights and sounds which he captures in words giving us an insight to his experience. John doesn't say anything about an aroma, and it makes me wonder if there was an odor of incense floating in the air as prayers are brought to the Holy Spirit. The first thing that captures his attention is the throne, central and exalted, symbolising God's ultimate authority. It is around this throne that the majesty and power of God John skillfully illustrates leaving us with a unique image. The vibrant colors and precious stones described evoke a sense of beauty and otherworldliness, highlighting that heaven is a place where creative power knows no bounds and without the limitations of the human mind. This reaffirms God as the ultimate Creator, whose artistry reflects the glory of God witnessed throughout creation.

Holiness reverberates throughout John's vision. The four six-winged living beings that encircle the throne are described as having distinct appearances, yet all share a singular focus on worshiping the Creator. They're a representation of God's creation, each aspect of nature paying homage to Him. John implies that these beings, despite their magnificence, are compelled to bow down continuously before God, showcasing that in heaven, the rhythm of existence is steeped in reverence and adoration. This highlights the principle that holiness dominates God's presence, where sin cannot dwell, and purity is the measure of worthiness. Many see a similarity between the four living ones and the way in which Christ is portrayed in the Gospels. In Matthew he appears as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; Mark has Jesus as the Servant who became the sacrifice for sin, Luke puts an emphasis on the son of Man and a flying eagle linking Jesus with heaven, in the same way in John's gospel.

The 24 elders around the throne affirm all our hope in God's promises of eternity and worship. Their actions of casting crowns before God are symbolic of letting go of personal glory and recognising that all honor and glory ultimately belongs to God. This act signifies humility and acknowledgment of the divine authority underpinning their existence. They proclaim God's worthiness to receive glory, honor, and power, features the universal truth: all creation exists to capture and reflect the glory of God, its Creator.

God's eternal nature is also emphasised throughout chapter 4. The elders proclaim that God is not only the source of creation but remains sovereign over all history. The statement that God created all things and that by the will of God they exist and were created revealing the essence of cosmic order. The source of everything comes from God, and everything serves a higher purpose within God's plan. This creates a deeper understanding of our place in the world; we are part of a greater narrative that extends beyond our temporal existence.

John's experience serves as a reminder of the sacred nature of worship and invites all believers to recognise the beauty of holiness, the worthiness of God, and the call to live

worshipful live according to God’s will. Revelation 4 invites us to anticipate our eternal destiny with God, where God’s presence transforms everything including ourselves. In heaven, glory, honor, and power rightfully belong to God, and as we reflect on this, we are reminded of the call to elevate our worship and recognition that we live in the kingdom of God. Ultimately, John’s vision is a compelling calling to remain grounded in faith, worship, and the understanding of God’s overwhelming majesty and grace. Amen

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION POINTS

- For peaceful negotiations to end conflicts around the world – freedom for those who have been taken against their will.
- Those who are grieving for the loss of loved ones, for hopes and dreams which will never come to fruition.
- For those in leadership roles of all persuasions.
- For finding ways to better understand each other without causing hurt
- To bring us all closer to Christ where our worship becomes an integral part of our lives.

‘FOR GOD’S PLEASURE’ by Deborah Ann Belka

<p>You were created, For God’s pleasure Your faith and trust To Him is a treasure</p>	<p>for He molded you, into His likeness making you a portrait of His kindness</p>	<p>You were created, for God’s joy and delight to bring praise to Him... with a heart contrite!</p>
<p>God created you, To give Him praise For His glory All of your days.</p>	<p>For He formed you, to give him honour, by gracing you with His mercy and favour.</p>	



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANmnqRZR1Gw>

