

The War Window – North Side

On March 21st, 1921, this stained glass window was installed. There was a packed church here at Cadder; it was dedicated by the Rev Woodside Robinson, who was the minister here and who had served for a year in the front line of the Great War.

So, this service would have had moved the minister deeply.

At the service of dedication they listened to the lament of the *Flowers of the Forest* followed by two buglers from the Gordon Highlanders who sounded the *Last Post*.

The window was donated by Sir Hugh Reid, who was chairman of the North British Locomotive Company, the largest builder of steam locomotives in the world and the dominant employer in Springburn, throughout the early 20th century.

The window came at a great personal cost for Sir Hugh, his eldest son James Reid, known as J.R., had been killed, on 25th Sep 1915, at the Battle of Loos in Northern France.

J.R.'s passing also touched the heart of King George V, who sent Sir Hugh a personal letter of condolence. The emotions within the church, that Sunday, would have been very raw.

Sir Hugh Reid was also to donate the oak gallery that enhances the balcony of this Church and on it has incorporated the heritor's coats of arms.

It is an intriguing design and it looks to me that there may be a locomotive theme on the balcony, as it somewhat resembles rail tracks – if this was intended it would indeed be a fitting tribute to Sir Hugh Reid.

Two years ago, here in this church, I met his family from Galway in Ireland. They were over visiting Scotland and retracing Sir Hugh's footsteps. His granddaughter Joan, who would have been in her 80's, was surrounded by her children and grandchildren that day. They were rightly excited and proud of what they saw here at Cadder Church.

While she was in the city, she was welcomed to the City Chambers, for a civic reception, where she handed over perfectly preserved artefacts of her grandfather, to the safekeeping of the council.

They included priceless silver and gold caskets gifted by the Glasgow Corporation to Sir Hugh containing his 1917 *Freedom of the City* scroll.

The Reid family funded the construction of Springburn Park in 1892, the Springburn Winter Gardens in 1900 and the Springburn Public Halls in 1902.

The subject of the window is *supreme sacrifice* and it is a tribute to his eldest son J.R. and to all the young men of Auchinairn and Springburn who lost their lives in the 1914 – 1919 war.

J.R. was captain of the 10th Battalion Highland Light Infantry, which was the City of Glasgow Regiment. It was raised at Hamilton in August 1914 as part of Lord Kitchener's First New Army.

This window is inscribed with the words... *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* This is the keynote, for the window.

At the base of the window are the Highland soldiers, inspired by patriotism to a willing service, who are seen “going over the top” in the Battle of Loos. In the section above this, is the higher divine service as manifested by the disciples obeying the call of Christ. *Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.* The two top portions represent the crucifixion, the *supreme sacrifice* and *immortal service of love* for a suffering world.

So, this window is all about sacrifice and service.

This is the window at Cadder, that speaks to our generation.

It's 100 years old and yet it is as relevant today as the day it was dedicated.

Why?

Well, the issue in their day was the Great War, and this window represents them coming out of the war.

We also have been in a battle, not against human forces, but against a virus that has swept through our world claiming the lives of many people.

There has been great sacrifice made by front line workers – who went over the top and paid the ultimate price. So, we hold them in our highest regard.

But, as we look closely at the window, we are reminded of four themes. These themes are all found in our reading from Deuteronomy.

Jacqui Muir will now read for us...Deuteronomy 10 v12-13

Come and Follow Me

God is speaking to the people of the desert, as they have escaped Egypt. He lays before them, through Moses, important points regarding their relationship with God and each other.

Firstly, *Fear the Lord* or in other versions *Worship the Lord*. This is where our relationship with God begins. In Proverbs it is written, *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*. It is healthy for us to have fear of God...not fear that would make us into trembling wrecks, but a fear that brings reverence and respect to God when we come before him. It means giving God his rightful place. Recognising that we are not God, but that He is. That He is the potter and we are the clay. That we are dust of the earth and He has the power to do as he wishes; we need him for everything. In the window, the disciples are sitting at Jesus' feet. They are listening humbly, intently, and with reverence, and this is the attitude of the Christian. It is vitally important to give Jesus his rightful place in our lives, and at this moment in our lives, when we can't get to church to worship, it's important that we create moments of prayer and worship in our houses.

Secondly, we are invited to do all he commands, or in another translation it is simply *Follow Him* and this is the second important hall mark of a Christian; to Follow Christ.

That's what our central part of the window is all about, following Jesus. Today, more than ever, these two words are essential for our church, follow Jesus.

Mary Livingstone will now read for us...Mark 1 v16-20.

We are rightly concerned about the future of our churches, and the easy thing to do would be to sweep the issues under the carpet, but they won't go away. We hear much about everything being a new normal, and maybe it will, but there are constants in the Christian faith and this is one – Follow Christ – this is what will get us through this pandemic and this is the rock on which we must build the church. We have no other rock.

The Church is all about Christ. He is the corner stone and He is the head of the Church. God has come to us in Christ, and through Him He has reconciled the world to God and so we make Christ central to our lives and when we do this everything else will fall into place.

Follow Jesus, do all he commands, and we will steer a way through this pandemic; but most important, we will go in the direction that he is leading us.

When we fear the Lord and we follow Jesus, this will lead us on to be the people whom God wants us to be – people whose lives are filled with love. Our love will increase for God. Our relationship with Him will be renewed each day.

I can't think of anything more important in life, than my relationship with God. For when this is right, then everything else will be right. When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word, this will bring us to serve him and to obey all that he commands.

We can trust in the good purposes of the Lord.

Our reading in Deuteronomy finishes with the words *I am giving them to you today for your benefit* or *I am giving you this for your own good*.

God only wants what's best for us. He created us for relationship with Him and when we are in relationship with Him, then we will thrive, we will blossom like the fruit on the vine.

That great parable from John's gospel, *I am the vine and you're the branches and those who remain in me will produce much fruit*.

This window has much to teach us about service and sacrifice, for following Christ is often a sacrificial journey.

There are some details in the window that are very interesting.

Jesus calls ordinary people to follow him – fishermen who knew little about public speaking but who knew a lot about life and how to chart a course through life. God delights in taking ordinary people and using them to do extraordinary things.

Perhaps Jesus is calling you today... *Follow me and I will make you*... you see Christ makes us, we don't make ourselves, it's all the work of His grace, when we commit ourselves to Christ, He takes and renews, refreshes us and sets us out on a great journey of faith.

Sir Hugh Reid chose to place Jesus at the centre of this special window. It was a great choice, because to follow Christ is to live a life of sacrifice, but it is also to live a life of blessing.

Hear again his words, Come and follow me...